

# CHINA IN SIGN AND SYMBOL

LOUISE CRANE



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CHINA IN SIGN AND SYMBOL

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# CHINA

## IN SIGN AND SYMBOL

BY  
LOUISE CRANE

With Decorations By  
KENT CRANE



SHANGHAI:  
KELLY & WALSH, LTD.  
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CHINA  
IN SIGN AND SYMBOL  
LOUISE GRANE  
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS  
BY THE AUTHOR



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## DEDICATION.

*To those in whom the Desire to Know  
Is only surpassed by the Determination—*

*And in whom, the Determination Grows,  
In proportion as Impediments Multiply,*

*This small effort at the Solution of  
an Apparent Mystery*

*Is fraternally dedicated,*

*by*

*The Author.*





## *Introduction :*



*ALL symbols are of universal use and date from earliest antiquity. Mrs. Louise Crane has taken in hand in this volume to describe some of the symbols she has observed in the social life of the Chinese. The symbols that exist in modern times may have their origin in prehistoric days. That which looks new may yet carry the weight of innumerable years. It is difficult to trace the origin of many of these. Whether symbols and signs existed before speech is an undetermined point. Many maintain that symbols were used before speech. There are many ways of communication between men. At first they extended only as far as the eye could see; but symbols are now employed for long distances and signs are used to annihilate space. They are trying to penetrate as far as Mars, but most stop nearer and are satisfied if the distant parts of the earth are reached. Symbols are our agents. Some scientists would have us believe that we have no essential connection with matter—as a real part of our being—but*

*that the whole of material existence is symbolic. In any case, symbols form a great part of our life. By means of codes, of signs, and material means we send messages by the vibration of the air, and record them by conventional traces. Then again there are pictures. These appeal to children and the illiterate before words.*

*Of the three allied words sign, emblem, symbol, sign is the most comprehensive and generic. Sign has manifold meanings: an emblem is always visible to the eye—a circle is the emblem of eternity: in Chinese we have a corresponding picture representing T'ai Chi, or the Absolute.*

*A symbol is a sign included in the idea it represents: an actual part to represent the whole. A lion is the symbol of courage. On the other hand, conventionally we speak of tears as the signal of grief. The science of Mathematics is largely symbolical.*

*"The rude cross on the soldier's grave is a symbol—the dented helmet which lies on the mound below is not a symbol but a sign. Both of them 'touch the mind,' but in different ways. The symbol is metaphorical—the sign is factual: the symbol implies something abstract—the sign reminds of something that has happened or that is true. In marriage, for example, the ring is a symbol—of perpetuity and fidelity. The grasping of hands is a sign, de presenti, of the covenant then made. The Cross is a symbol of sacrifice; the crucifix is not a symbol, but a sign—it reminds of the actuality of an atonement. A symbol signifies—a sign shows."*

*Symbol has been defined as, "Anything that stands for something else."*

*The pictures on the clay cylinders are symbols. By a common understanding it was agreed on that the pictures of certain animals should be always used as symbols to represent certain things. These hieroglyphics then are symbols, the key of which being known, help the Egyptologist to understand and interpret these mysterious signs.*

*Readers of Mrs. Crane's book are introduced into manifold views of the social life of the Chinese as the authoress pictures one phase of the people's life after another.*

*The literature and the cosmogony of this ancient nation is full of symbolic ideas. To take colour alone, it introduces us at once to a deep and complex series of ideas some of which are most suggestive.*



Take for example white, which has been the colour worn during mourning from times immemorial and which is frequently mentioned by Mrs. Crane in this book. The Chinese think it was adopted because it was the simplest and the purest—they had not yet got a Newton to tell them it was composed of about seven different colours—and being the simplest it was in their minds the most consonant for the purpose of grief. Though there is no documentary evidence to prove it, nevertheless, the real reason for its adoption lay in the fact that it was looked upon as the least conspicuous, and, therefore, the wearer would not be easily found by the ghost of the dead person, or other spirits. It therefore has much symbolic significance. So has black. This is the colour of common dignity. It was the colour for the magistrate in days gone by, and esteemed for its neutrality and dignity.

In Chinese cosmogony colours play an important part. The stars and constellations have their symbolic colours, and so, likewise, have the Five elements, the Five viscera, the Five points of the Compass, the Five virtues and others. Each member, in each of these groups, is related to some colour, and as a consequence, there is an interrelation between each and all, the symbolic significance of colour being the uniting link.

The deep-red marble is highly prized, for it betokens peace and prosperity to the reigning house. Equally the arrival of those infrequent ambassadors of good omen, the Chilin and the Phœnix, are highly welcome and the atmosphere of magical ideas which they create is almost enough to ensure the truth of the romantic legend about their virtues.

One of the most august symbols in China is that seen at the ancestral ceremonies where we have the dead ancestor present in a living representative of the family. This is a very solemn occasion. The revered ancestor is supposed to be actually present and to partake with the other representatives of the clan of the sacred offering to those gone on before. The "Live Corpse" is there and symbolizes his ancestor for he stands for something else other than himself. This venerated symbol in the social life of the nation has very ennobling thoughts—for who would not wish to feel that the beloved dead were with us even though it be only once a year at the great feast.

*Then again we have those symbolic rites performed at the South Altar outside the south gate of the capital. We must picture that great and solemn ceremony carried on regularly for thousands of years and only suspended with the coming of a new regime of unanimated ideas. Think of the emperor fasting for three days, then proceeding on the destined day, long before dawn, in his chariot with the particular horses harnessed suitably for the occasion. He wore the imperial tassels with their symbolic significance, with the banners and streamers and the gonfalon spread. Travelling slowly over the swept ground, lit along the way by guards carrying the appointed lamps, they reach the altar—majestic in its simplicity—and there he makes the offering to Heaven and Earth, sacrificing animals that have been made ceremonially clean by months of rigorous seclusion and special care. Now, every article, every bit of drapery, every movement had a symbolic idea. This highly significant ceremony has been observed through long ages and the Altar of Heaven in Peking today testifies to the high place these symbolic acts had in the national life. But now the precincts are desecrated since the idea behind the symbol is obscured.*

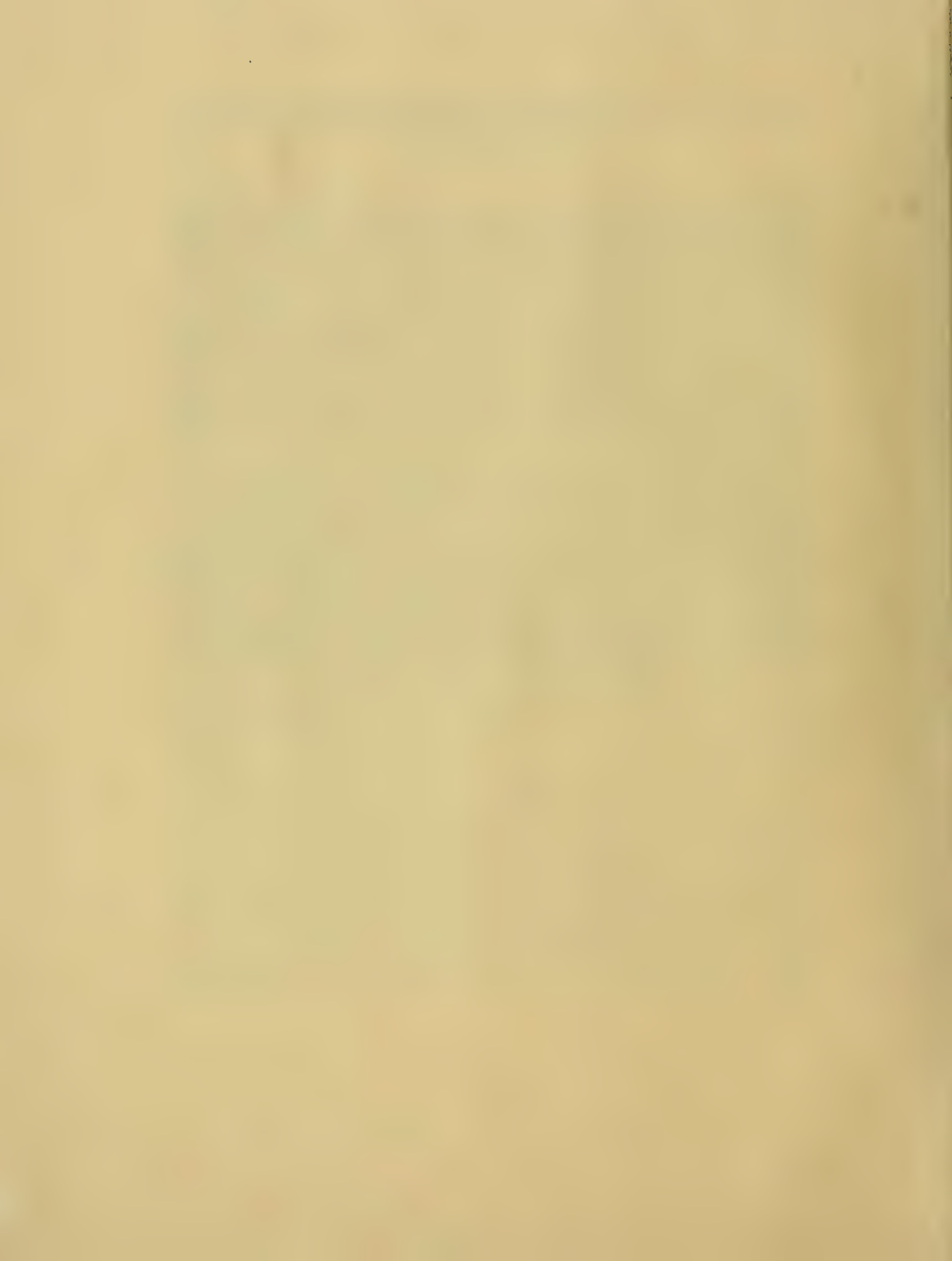
*It is perhaps in the Sacred Dance, or Eurythmics that we see the most perfect example of symbols. By means of the movement, and the wands and castanets, the jade and the battleaxe, the various influences and deeds of virtuous rulers were symbolized. For example, the music of Wen Wang (12th Century B.C.), one form of which is called Nan Yoh, was danced to the accompaniment of the flute alone. A spectator exclaimed "How beautiful it is, and yet it brings a certain sadness with it". In the opening movement, the march of the dancers towards the north indicated the march of the armies of Wu against Shang. Another movement depicts the overthrow of Shang and the victory of Wu: the third shows the return south and the delimitation of territory: the fifth round shows how the Dukes of Chou and Shao were delegated with the authority of west and east: the sixth round depicts the gathering at headquarters in the south to display homage to the Son of Heaven. Two men, one on each side of the performers, excite the movement of the dancers with bells. Four times they stop and thrust in order to reveal the abundant awe which king Wu inspired in the Middle States.*



*Then there was the dance of the Yun Men, or, "The Gates of the Cloud". This dance was intended to symbolise the active sympathy of the Emperor Yao, with the ways of Heaven: and another dance symbolised his accord with Earth. A still more important dance was intended to symbolise the communion of men and spirits in the Ancestral Temple. Again, it is recorded that when Wu Chi Chia witnessed the dance of Shao with its rhythmic motions and the waving of the wands so beautifully executed, he exclaimed "How great the virtues of Shun. Lofty as the dome of Heaven which embraces everything, vast as the earth which sustains all things." But perhaps enough has been said to show the great part played by these symbolic representations.*

*Mrs. Crane has been a faithful observer of the social life of the Chinese, and a diligent investigator of their customs and manners. It was a happy idea of hers to seek for and expound the symbolisms that are prevalent in every avenue of life. She has found them on the signs outside the shop, in their festivals, in the rites of mourning and the ceremonies of marriage. These are set out in the work now presented to the public. In the letterpress and by the illustrations readers in foreign lands will be well instructed in the social life of the nation, and by means of this window they will be able to look out on a vast community of people which has a great inheritance.*

EVAN MORGAN.





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Photographs of Peking Shop Fronts are by John D. Zumbrun, Peking.  
Reproductions of Shanghai Tael from *The Currencies of China*, courtesy of E. Kann.

## *Preface:*



FROM the point of view of authorship, the musical composer appears to enjoy a decided preliminary advantage over the literary craftsman, in that the former feels himself under no imaginable obligation of apologizing for the prelude, by means of which he prepares the mood of his audience for the reception of his theme. The author of a book, on the other hand, allows himself the privileges of a preface in no manner of doubt as to its fate at the hands of the usual percentage of readers, in whom the aversion for introductions is broad, impartial, and sustained by the conviction that no hunt is improved by the conscious selection of an obstacle at the outset. It is, therefore, without illusions on this score that the author of the present offering ventures, under this formidable title, on a few prefatory remarks, intended solely to suggest some of the peculiar circumstances attending the exploration of the subject. The high visibility of its external marks, the *Huang Tze*, is amply demonstrated in our succeeding pages, and

they may be depended upon to speak for themselves in their proper turn. The conventionalized, or *seal* characters appearing on our title page represent the term applied to the *shop device*, as distinguished from the *inscribed signboard*, or *Tiao Pai*, the other of the two classes of signs employed by the Chinese shopkeeper.

In short, these introductory paragraphs are undertaken in the belief that they will be of special interest to the reader who brings to the perusal of this volume a more or less considerable previous knowledge of China, and who for this reason will be subject, inevitably, to certain initial errors of thought. It may be that his experience will have been gained in the outports, or, perhaps, in the port cities of bygone days, when native shop symbols were still contributing their very large quota to the decorative aspect of Chinese streets. In this event, he will have become so familiar with the sight of the emblems, by means of which the Chinese shopkeeper avoids the commonplace in announcing the character of his wares, that he may long since have accepted, without understanding them. Or, again, moved by an occasional vagrant impulse in the latter direction, he may have assumed that their elucidation might be had, at any time, for the mere asking. In this comfortable conclusion, it seems desirable to point out, he would ultimately have found himself mistaken.

Another faulty, though natural deduction, equally arising from an acquaintance with matters Chinese, would be the presupposition that the inquiry into the history and significance of shop-sign symbolism is one that may be conducted along the lines of any other excursion into the fascinating and colourful past of Imperial China; and that it promises the same sort of incidental and delightful experiences which properly belong to such journeys—as who will not testify, who has ever made one, whether guided by the historian, the Chinese teacher, or the omnipresent and omniscient curio-dealer? And who, among such, would not almost as lief surrender the original object of the intellectual expedition, as to imagine himself travelling its paths, bereft of the charming detours, where were revealed unexpected glimpses at dead-and-gone personalities, whose interpretation, under the touch of the living representative of the departed, gave rise to grateful reflections on the abiding vitality of the national characteristics of the Chinese.



Was ever, for example, such a contingency conceivable, as that a relic of the celestial Empire—whether under the Han, Sung, Ming, or some other era of epoch-makers—might be presented by one who could not unloose inexhaustible rivers of eloquence as to its incontrovertible antiquity, its functions, and, in fact, the invisible threads by which it held together the entire fabric of Chinese art, of its own and preceding periods?

It was plainly unthinkable, in the days, not so long ago, when monarchical magnificences still lingered fondly in the memory of the Chinese people; and were a matter of personal pride, and, indeed, of such extraordinarily accurate instinct with so large a majority that, unwittingly, one came to regard all classes of the Chinese, above that of the coolie, as potential artists. And one was not without encountering a surprise, now and then, even at the hands of the coolie.

This road to knowledge, too, was susceptible of being pleasantly enlivened and extended by manifestations of the intricacies with which, for instance, so simple an act as the acquisition of a curio was involved with the easy tranquillity of one's daily life in China. This truth one learned from the carefully-insinuated doubts of the Number One Boy, and an innumerable train of related authorities in whom one's well-being reposed. Actuated, ostensibly, by the purest sentiments of devotion to a master whom they could not endure to see despoiled by an unscrupulous vendor, these guardians of one's sanctity, while delicately disclosing the source of greater profit to themselves, could be counted upon to open up further channels of information in the inevitable, and apparently accidental, visits of rival dealers. In other words, one's arrival at ultimate understanding was limited only by one's physical capacity to listen and absorb—when it was not interrupted by a superseding interest in another offering.

And similarly, in other fields of inquiry. Whatever the institution, whatever the page in the Book of Life in ancient China to which one might be minded to turn, one found its interpreter not too far off. And it is by no means intended to suggest that such adventures, to some extent, may not be experienced to-day. They must, of course, be sought in the districts removed from the wave of modernism that has swept over the port cities, destroying the atmosphere of old China, and creating in its place a prodigious rush for foreign clothes, motor-cars, "foreign"-style homes, and similar blessings derived from

the West. It has also produced another kind of curio-shop, presided over by haughty and uninformed young clerks; and a fraternity of itinerant vendors bearing the familiar blue-cotton bundles, but equally ignorant and unskilled in the art of which the distributor of Chinese curios should be the master. Yet all of these are far from being typical of the real China of to-day.

This being so, then, who, among the initiated, would have predicted that, in the single instance of so universal, and equally authentic an expression of life under the Empire, as the Chinese shop symbol, the inquirer into its history would be forced to blaze his own trail? What previous experience would prepare him for the astonishing circumstance that the simple question, as to the *origin* of the *Huang tze*, proves to have power to strike dumb the most loquacious? Pointed in every imaginable direction, and at representatives of all classes of the Chinese, the query only succeeds in plunging the interrogated into a condition of profound—and silent—bewilderment. In fact, one feels like the discoverer of the original Chinese puzzle; or like the propounder of another riddle of a Chinese Sphinx, which awaits solution at the hands of an *Edipus*—though, fortunately, in this case the question is not attended by the dire consequences of silence that afflicted the people of Thebes.

Such, then, is the excuse for these introductory pages—the fact that the quest, whose results are recorded in the following chapters, is probably unique among expeditions into Chinese history, insofar as its *modus operandi* is concerned; this having been developed, bit by bit, under the persistence with which the subject eluded pursuit, and conducted, at first, to a discouraging succession of blind alleys. One is forced to conclude that the custom has always been, and that its explanation lies in the predominating illiteracy of the Chinese public. At which a whimsical, and perhaps altogether reprehensible thought rises to mind: Supposing ignorance to be more or less generally responsible for such artistic effect as it carries in this instance, how difficult might it not become to plead the cause of knowledge!

L. C.

*The author's acknowledgments for the invaluable assistance of Chinese friends are gratefully extended to Prof. Yüeh T'ang, Ph.D., formerly head of the Department of Psychology at Peking University, Dr. Fong Sec, Mr. Z. C. Koo, Mr. J. S. Tsui, and Mr. P. K. Tsai.*

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## PRELIMINARIES

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A TYPICAL PEKING SHOP FRONT  
*(from a colour drawing by Kent Crane)*



## Chapter One:

### *The Symbols' Background.*

"The ten chapters of the *Great Learning*<sup>1</sup> finish with words about profit; the half of the book *Chow Kwan* discourses about wealth."—TYPICAL PILLAR INSCRIPTION OF CHINESE SHOP.



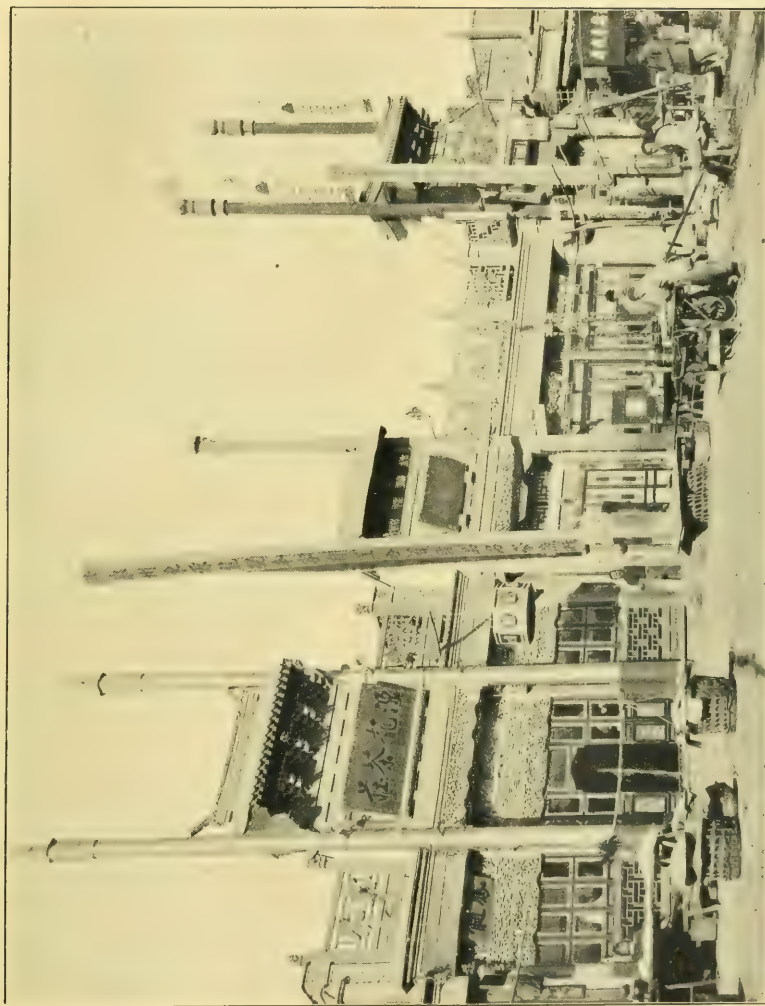
IN a time-and-space-defying era like the present, when the word "remote" is more and more sparingly applied to distant lands and peoples, it was to be anticipated that even the rigid barrier of ancient Chinese reserve was due to meet dissolution at the magic touch of progress. Nevertheless, one can but yield to a momentary surprise, now and then, when comparing the seemingly impenetrable obscurity that enveloped the social structure of the Chinese nation until a decade or two ago, with the frank revelations that are now in daily process of being offered to an army of foreign travellers. Thus far, it is true, the exposition has been carried on within somewhat fixed limits, as if certain phases of native life had fallen, naturally, or by design, into a category that provides a kind of First Course for Beginners. Whosoever's may have been the guiding hand, the success of the programme was immediate; and its popularity is by way of being augmented day by day, as though in response to some mysterious edict

which has decreed that for all time to come, and with the regularity of the moon and tides, the Western world shall impinge on the established order of things in the Far East; and that it shall return to its orbit duly charged with impressions, which shall be disseminated abroad and verified, in due course, by a newly-appointed body of representatives.

In these circumstances, it plainly behoves one to observe a measure of reasonable restraint in touching on the subject of the Chinese shop, as that institution discloses itself to view in Peking. The celebrated "black velvet door" and the delights that lie beyond it, may be assumed to have achieved universal fame, since legions of uninitiated tourist heels already have been soundly whacked by an engaging contrivance which, of course, is not a door at all, but a heavy curtain, reinforced at intervals with horizontal strips of brass-studded wood. Innocent-looking enough, its potentialities soon impress themselves on the novice, who finds them demanding the utmost dexterity and economy of movement, lest one be caught somewhere in the process of lifting the "door," insinuating one's body, and vaulting over the high sill. The feat accomplished, one is free to revel in the unwonted luxury of leisurely methods of trade, in which time is shown to be a mere fetish of the Occidental, and far too gross an element to be weighed against the enticements of tea-and-cigarettes; the friendly barter of English words for their equivalents in Chinese; the enlivening shrieks of the Chinese record on the gramophone—obviously functioning for the entertainment of servitors, as well as patrons—and other less commonplace incidents that now and then fall to the lot of the fortunate, to enhance the charms of these interior explorations.

The theme, however, has not awaited expansion at our hands, having been abundantly and eloquently covered, long since. And, in any event, we should be obliged to skim but lightly over the field mapped out by the guide-book cartographer, for the reason that these necessarily perfunctory contacts with old China play no part whatever in our present narrative.

On the other hand, the background of our series of *tableaux vivants* is by no means an unfamiliar one, at least to the eye of the reader acquainted with Peking. Into its composition enter those long stretches of low buildings, in which the strictly native shops ply their



*On the left, a large Tea shop. On the extreme right, a Candle shop.*





trades. Their façades, elaborately carved and touched with gilt, bristle with a horizontal forest of iron poles ending in dragons' heads; and from these swing the gaily-coloured and intriguing symbols whose elucidation forms our text. As part of the hitherto unexplored mystery of native life, these shop exteriors and their incidentals will have registered negatively, perhaps, in the foreign mind; but they will none the less have provided the setting for many a vision of the street scenes of the old imperial city, such as the thoughtful tourist seeks involuntarily to recreate for himself. His fantasies, to be sure, are peopled, usually, with folk arrayed in the garments comprising his store of mementoes; and in the pride of a newly-acquired knowledge of Chinese design, he fancies himself readily distinguishing the marks of rank displayed by the members of these brilliant companies of his imagination. Here and there he takes note of the colour of cap buttons, or the device worn on the front and back of gorgeously embroidered robes;<sup>2</sup> while yonder, perhaps, an approaching sedan chair proclaims its occupant to be a great dignitary, by the colour and character of its draperies. Whereupon he is fain to conjure up the characteristic commotion created by phantom forerunners and outriders, immensely self-important in their function of providing against any possible contact between ruler and ruled.

Under the stimulus of glittering palace- and temple-roofs, massive city walls, with imposing gates, and the multitude of imperial relics that crowd upon the vision in Peking, few minds are proof against these flights of fancy; and in the course of long ricksha rides through labyrinthian hutungs, or along the broad Chien Mèn Street, these quasi-human processions rise up and obliterate the present, while evoking sighs of regret for the more spectacular past.

In the *mélange* of these mental pictures, the item of the ornate shop fronts and their enigmatic symbols are fated to play a minor rôle throughout, and to recede, finally, into the dim recesses of memory, whence it is our pleasant purpose to call them forth. With this particular object in view, we shall pass over, as needs must, those marts of trade to which the tourist is introduced, since the quaint symbols illuminating our pages are not to be found at the portals of the large shops frequented by foreigners.

Here, instead, it is arrogantly assumed that the patron, if Chinese, is of the cultured minority; and hence, there swings outside a long narrow board on which golden characters, against a plain, black background, proclaim the nature of that which is to be found within. The foreign patron, for all that he matters in Peking, may remain unenlightened as to their message, to the end of time, if he like; though in the foreign settlements of the ports their purport is set forth for him in what passes for the King's English.

This unvarying device, in replacing the old shop symbols, has robbed the streets of the port cities of China, even in their native sections, of much of their former picturesqueness. Yet, though one is prone invariably to attribute to foreign influence, the gradual elimination of the decorative and characteristic in the aspect of modern China, the "West" can be held only indirectly responsible in this instance, for a movement which, in Chinese quarters, is asserted to be a part of the voluntary determination, after the establishment of the republic, to put away all marks of monarchy. Whether or not—and how accurately—the growing number of inscribed signboards indicates the probable increase of literacy since this change in the political face of the country, may be judged from the fact that in the great world of China, outside of these commercial centres, the ancient symbols prevail, and will do, probably, for many an age to come.

It is by no means intended to suggest, however, that the character-bearing signboards are less firmly rooted in antiquity than are their more intriguing neighbours. They form, indeed, a profoundly interesting study in themselves, and one less difficult to pursue—granted, of course, a knowledge of the language. For while novel and story are barren of reference to the subject of our illustrations, the inscribed sign and banner come in for considerable mention in the literature of the past, as will shortly appear. These *tiao pai*, or inscribed signs, do not lie exactly in our line of vision; yet, before proceeding with the consideration of the *huang tze*<sup>3</sup>—which are passing out of use, and which, with the aid of our Chinese artist, we have caught on the wing, so to speak—it may not be out of place to direct a well-merited side glance at the *tiao pai*.

The fact is, that the inscribed signboard is replete with significance to the student of Chinese psychology, as one of many eloquent examples of the native belief in the mystical powers inhering in the

written word. By the same token, it may be said that most of the mental processes of the Chinese are revealed in the content of the inscriptions found on pillar and post, in home, shop, temple and public gathering-place. To the characters themselves are attributed mysterious powers of attraction; and far from being the mere visible expression of thoughts, they are held to be capable of radiating invisible forces. Such, indeed, is the function of the ideographs signifying "longevity," "happiness," "prosperity," and other ideal states, that play so large a part in Chinese design. They are more than words, and cannot be called symbols: and so unquestioned is their potentiality, that the sight of the character for "happiness," for example, when inscribed on some object in the home, enjoins upon the visitor the duty of congratulating the fortunate possessor as one favoured of the gods. For it must be presupposed that the auspicious influences thus invoked are actually and actively in operation. The belief, naturally, expresses itself in many ways, great and small; but one of the most amusing of its phases is demonstrated in a popular custom which makes a naïve admission with regard to the inner workings of that universal ideal of the Chinese—the creation of a numerous progeny. Though inspired by what may be called spiritual needs, one learns that the ideal, nevertheless, may be expected to take its own toll of human patience, seasonally at least, in the process of realization. In other words, though each addition to the circle of descendants, on whom rests the responsibility for the happy hereafter of their parents, admittedly is to be regarded as an especial gift of the gods—particularly when the newcomer chances to be of the male sex—there are moments, apparently when, even to the Chinese father, the baby's stock is none of the highest. For one is assured that the Chinese parent is not above "walking the floor" at nights with his beloved offspring. When, therefore, he finds himself overtaken by one of these periods of domestic stress, he sits himself down, in desperation, writes the following message on a piece of paper, leaves the house, and posts up the S.O.S. call on the first convenient place along the road:

"Yellow Heaven, and Yellow Earth!" (An exclamation expressive of the uttermost limits of exasperation). "I have a night-squalling brat at home! Will some passing gentleman kindly read this once, so that I may sleep till morning light!"



The impulse that inspires this appeal is altogether a selfish one; for the ill-fated passerby, who, in an unwary, or over-curious moment, puts himself in possession of the contents of the inscription, thereby becomes the victim of this troublesome tendency of young babies. In other words, the writer of the script is relieved at the expense of the reader, who can only rid himself of the nuisance, in his turn, by proceeding similarly.

The interrelation of the component parts of the Chinese written character is another important point worth noting in this connection. It is best illustrated in the activities of the numerous body of fortune-tellers and diviners without whom the street scene, market-place, or temple-fair in China would be incomplete, and whose calling, besides, is subject to none of the fluctuations common to other trades. For the poor, says an old proverb, "never leave the shop of the fortune-teller; as the rich are never distant from the medicine cup." The first business of the expert on destiny is the separation of the characters representing the name of a patron into their various parts. These he traces back to origins; and the results of his investigations he includes among those on which he builds up the horoscope of his client.

It should be mentioned, also, while we are on the subject of names, that a business man is often known, outside his circle of intimate friends, by his shop-sign, rather than by his given name. Thus, for example, Mr. Wang, is known as *Fu Chun*, "Return of Spring," which is the name of his shop. The placard may quite possibly have occupied its place at the shop door for several centuries—in fact, it is highly desirable that it should do so—and whether or not, in the course of this period, succeeding generations of Wangs have conducted business under this sign, the proprietor, or proprietors will have been known as *Fu Chun*.

Thus the inscribed signboard will be seen to serve a variety of purposes, the hoped-for stimulation of invisible forces being indicated in the presence of certain characters of auspicious meaning, invariably carried by the merchant's sign, besides those enumerating his wares and his name. From earliest times, it would seem, a certain number of the words endued with the elements of good augury, have been given preference over others, as having special application to the needs of the business man; and the identity of these is shown in a



comprehensive study of something under 5,000 of the signboards, published by Prof. Chang Yao-hsiang, of the Peking Teachers' College.

From the total number of auxiliary characters used in the signs selected for his observations, Prof. Chang estimates the average per sign as two and a half words. Yet he finds only 800 of these in use, which demonstrates their frequent repetition. The 20 most popular words and their meanings, he enumerates as follows:

*Hsin* (prosper, forge ahead), *hua* (beautiful, Chinese), *ho* (harmony, co-operation), *yi* (mutual help, righteous), *che* (succeed), *shun* (agreeable), *feng* (plenty), *tien* (heaven, Creator, indicating faith), *chu* (collect, maintain), *tung* (co-operate, unite), *tai* (expand, peace), *yuan* (fountain, abundant), *hsiang* (lucky), *sheng* (prosper, growth), *heng* (constant, permanent), *chang* (expand, grow), *ta* (grand, great), *kung* (in common, public-spirited), *yu* (rich, plenty), *lung* (prosper, grow).

This list makes clear the predominating thoughts in the mind of the Chinese shopkeeper; and in classifying these sentiments, it is interesting to note the total absence of anything to suggest the spirit of competition. *Growth*, *expansion* and *prosperity* appear to be the universal desire, as is shown in six of the 20 words, with *plenty* indicated three times. All of these objects are to be attained, apparently, by means of *co-operation*, *mutual help*, *harmony* and *public spirit*, which are four times repeated, in as many different ways.

The characteristic phraseology employed in signs of this sort is peculiarly interesting, the actual name of the shop being often chosen from some auspicious experience of the proprietor. Thus, for example, such a title as the "Return of Spring," may quite possibly have been given to commemorate a period of prosperity, following upon a more or less protracted struggle with the reverse.

In a list of these inscriptions collected by Dr. Justus Doolittle in his *Vocabulary and Handbook of the Chinese Language*, published in 1852, are mentioned a number of the commodities we shall encounter in our prospective tour; and as a means of presenting the contrasting methods in shopkeeper's announcements, the following examples are quoted:

At the "Tavern of the Harmonious Heart," it appears, were dispensed the "best-made meat and plain cakes, silver thread vermicelli,

and cakes for congratulatory presents." (These latter the reader will find described in the section on "Food Shops.")

The "Surpassing Fragrance House" provided "music and wine feasts for Manchu and Chinese visitors."

The "Saloon of the Drunken Moon" supplied black cat's flesh, a Cantonese delicacy.

The "Garden of Perpetual Spring" offered "wine and vinegar for childbirths, fine flavoured grains, and all kinds of preserved vegetables."

"Peace within the Seas" dealt in "all kinds of superior white rice for families."

The "Abundant Fountain" sold "firewood and coals from all waters"; and the "Handsome and Scented Saloon," cosmetics and artificial flowers.

A medicine shop proclaimed itself the "Temple of the Happy Mean," where noon-day tea was served, and remedies were "skilfully compounded." Among these were "powders for children, white phoenix pills for women, eye medicines made from the eight precious articles, a pill for comforting and harmonizing, and another for counteracting the seductive effects of opium."

"Increasing Riches" appeared over another medicine shop; while "The Half-awakened" examined the eyes, and read the physiognomy. A competitor of the latter called his place the "Most Pleasant Hall."

"Benevolence" dealt in "true cochineal and saffron-dyed skein silk floss, thread, etc."; while another dealer in the same articles designated his shop the "Commencement of Peace."

"Gold Stone Hall" was the engraver's sign; and his words, he declared to be "like gold and precious stones."

The "Prosperous Fountain" was a moneychanger's shop, and a bullion assayer claimed "Great Virtue"; while "Extensive Brilliancy" belonged to the dealer in all kinds of copper and brass utensils.

In proof of the fact that, as regards the shop sign, public sentiment in the business world remains unchanged, a tour of the streets of Shanghai yields, on existing signs, new and old, such evidence as the following:

"The Cloud of Joy," announces a clock and watch shop, and "Constant Profit," the shop dealing in foreign articles. "Celestial

Embroidery," is the sign of a coal dealer, and "Precious and Favourable," that of a native stove factory. "Han, the Abundant and Prosperous," conducts a stocking depôt, while "The Happy Union of all the Virtues," is claimed by a chemist. "The Golden Ox," is a needle shop, and "The Tinder-Case Shop of Smallpox Wang," illustrates another custom of the Chinese, among whom a deformity becomes a part of the name by which a person is known.

The zenith of effectiveness, however, appears to be achieved in the sign of the coffin shop. It reads: "Crystallized Prosperity!"

\* \* \* \*

Let us now, however, proceed on our tour of that vast area of shops where the old trade symbols of another sort swing in the breezes, as merrily as ever they did, and speak their message to the native public of Peking—this ancient stronghold of imperial glories offering itself as the most prolific field for observation of these relics of monarchy, both because it remains the centre of "old custom," and from the fact that our illustrations were gathered at random from the streets of the ancient capital. Certain sections of this district the initiated seek, just at nightfall, when the shadows gather, and street noises are softened, so that whispers of the past may fall on the ear. For a brief and breathless spell, both sound and light, appear to pause midway in flight before the advance of night, and one feels the imagination stirred with suggestions of invisible things, until even the mulled swish of the passing ricksha becomes vaguely mysterious. It is then that the joy is at its height, of moving through long rows, stretching away on either side, of the delicate, lace-like tracery of shop-front carvings, now dimly illuminated from within.

Yet it is in the broad light of day, that our symbols best come into play. And what setting more perfect than the blue skies and brilliant sunshine of Peking to bring out the vividness of blues, reds, yellows, gilt, silver, and so on, with which the eye is struck, first of all? In Peking's pervasive atmosphere of ancient custom, too, one feels more strongly the contact with native thought; and seeks to construct the reason for the things which pass under one's notice, all and several. But it is in the pursuit of such efforts as these, with regard to the universal shop symbol, that one realizes the uniqueness of one's expedition, for search and research as one will, question and cross-



question as one may, the usual path leading backward, and bordered with flowers of speech, is not to be found.

Finding oneself ill-prepared for such an experience in China, one insistently postpones acceptance of the probable explanation of the symbols, *i.e.*, the illiteracy of the Chinese masses. Moreover, this obstinate course appears to have some basis in logic, when it transpires that in many instances the subjects suspended at the shop entrances do not readily interpret themselves to the Chinese themselves; while an assembled collection of *pictured* symbols, such as is comprised in this volume, is found to be almost entirely unintelligible in Shanghai.

Thus one inclines to the thought that such as these, if not the entire system, may have proceeded from the ancient guilds—that vast underlying structure, whose ramifications embraced every form of human effort, except that of the artist, or poet, and, together with the institution of the family, may be said to constitute the foundation of the social system of China.

But linger as one may over the consideration of this amazing example of industrial organization, which comprises both employer and employed, one fails, still, to discover, in available sources of information, any reference to trademarks as having been among the provisions of the guilds. In view, however, of the completeness of their scope, resulting from careful attention to every other detail in the construction and administration of their laws, it were strange, indeed, if such an item as the trade insignia had been left to the individual to devise. Yet the point is likely never to be cleared up, since this extraordinary system has been maintained from age to age, without records of its activities ever having been made. The explanation of this fact lies in one of the most striking characteristics of Chinese thought, *viz.*, the reverence for the written character, which it was deemed a sacrilege to employ in the treatment of so humble a subject, or, indeed, for the collation of statistics generally.

It appears, however, that no such inhibitions have prevented the keeping of guild records in Korea, many of which date back several thousands of years. Moreover, the history of the Chinese guilds was found to be traceable in the Korean records, according to Mr. Sidney Gamble, who includes an interesting study of the former in his *Survey of Peking*. In this volume—which makes no reference



to the trade symbols—Peking's shop signs in general are attributed to the Ching Dynasty, from the fact that the Manchu conquest was attended by the burning and looting of shops and homes, and the universal eradication of Chinese, in favour of Manchu customs. The reconstruction of the guilds to conform with new needs, in the matter of dress and the multitude of toilet accessories, the introduction of the queue, and so forth, naturally followed; and Mr. Gamble found existing Peking guilds marking their reorganization from 1644, the date of the Manchu accession. Subsequent changes in organization again attended the establishment of the Republic; though, generally speaking, only among the guilds of the barbers, hat-makers, tailors, undertakers and others concerned directly with changes in social customs. One guild, alone, has remained unchanged under all these political and industrial disturbances; namely, the Guild of the Blind, which has maintained a continuous existence since 206 B.C., in the beginning of the early Han Dynasty.

Mr. Gamble's description of a meeting, typical of one of the larger guilds, is replete with suggestiveness as to the control which this system exercises over the lives of the masses of the Chinese people, when it is recalled that membership in a guild is practically obligatory—though it is seldom necessary to bring pressure to bear to enforce it—on every human being, however lowly his task. Against the necessity of making his annual contribution, and the other restrictions imposed by the guild, the worker weighs its benefits; for his success in business, whether he be master or man, the collection of debts, the defence against the aggressions of officials, and unjust lawsuits, et cetera, all rest with the organization.

An annual meeting of one of the larger guilds is described as presenting the spectacle of a large hall, with a long table running down the centre, at which forty-eight men are seated. Twenty-four are bearers of titles, such as: General Manager, President, Vice-President, Judge, Attorney-General, Prosecuting Attorney, Grand Juror, Juror of the Court, Sheriff, Counsellor, Protector, Law Proctor, Witness, Advisor, Inspector, Investigator, Court Reporter, Chief of Police, Executioner, Warrant Carrier, Timekeeper, Doorkeeper, Servant of the Court. All are elected either by lot or by choice of the General Manager.

The business of the meetings runs the gamut from the settlement of strikes and other disputes between employer and employed, the trial and sentence of offenders against the laws of the guild, the initiation of members and the registration of new places of business, to every imaginable detail of trade, including the granting of copyrights and like privileges to inventors. But the first item of the agenda is invariably the worship of the patron gods of the guilds, chief among whom is Kuan Ti, once a military hero, who was ennobled in A.D. 219, and subsequently deified by decree of the Ming Emperor, Wan Li, in 1594, since which time he has been called the "God of War."

In the general run of small shops, one still finds to-day the rude shrine and image of this or some other divine, or semi-divine patron, such as the familiar "God of the Hempen Sack," who presides in the shop of the tobacconist. It may be that his benign protection emanates only from a painted scroll—weatherbeaten and covered in grime—that hangs above a table which brazier and candlesticks convert into an altar; but it is safe to say that he is never absent from any place of business, however modest.

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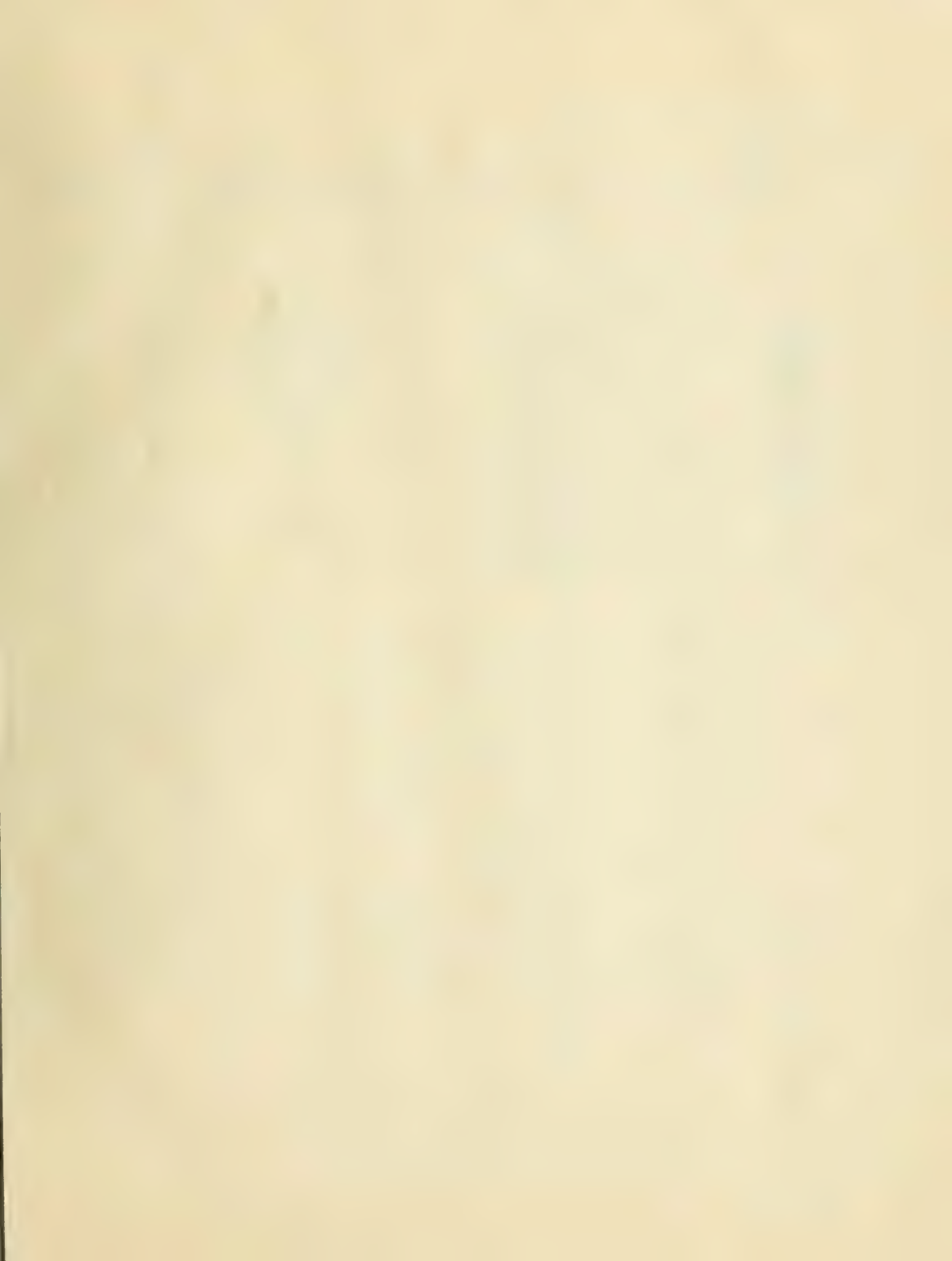
THE INNER MAN

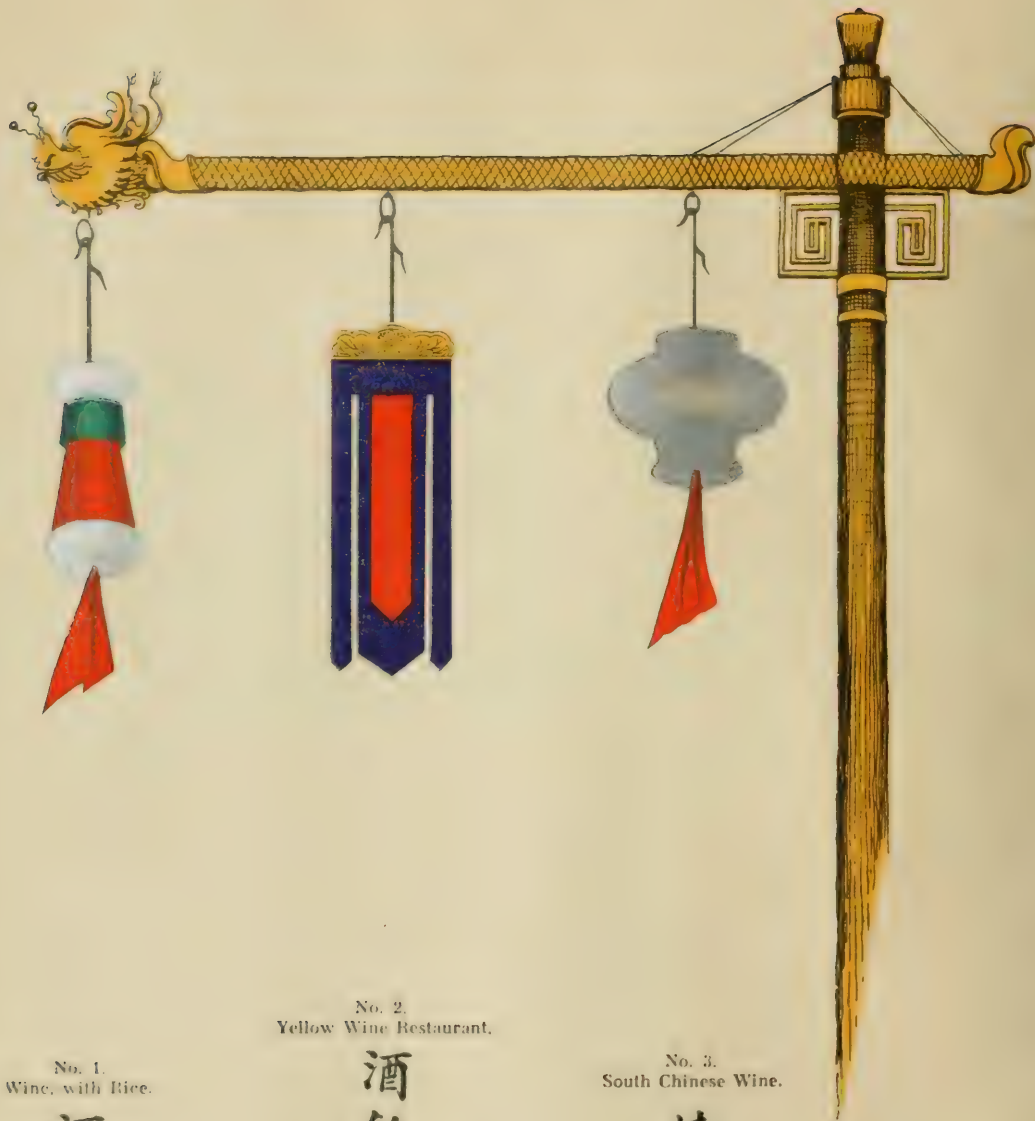
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No. 1.  
Wine, with Rice.

酒飯幌子

No. 2.  
Yellow Wine Restaurant.

酒飯鋪幌子

No. 3.  
South Chinese Wine.

燒酒幌子

## Chapter Two: *Wine Shops and Inns.*

"The wind blows, filling the room with the fragrance of willow flowers;  
A Wu' beauty draws the new wine, inviting the guests to taste;  
Young men of Ginling come to bid each other good-bye,  
But instead of departing, they linger, and each drinks his fill.  
Gentlemen, I would ask of you: 'The water that flows eastward—  
Is it, or the remembrance of parting, the more lasting?'"

LI TAI Po's *A Farewell at a Restaurant.*



AFTER experiencing the defeat of one's efforts at historical research, one turns to the field of romance as the last remaining hope, since it is evident that here, at all events, the ancient inhibitions that guarded against the "desecration" of the written character had not been enforced. Hence, one scans the works of poet and novelist with renewed zest, and a thrill of secret gratification. These furtive celebrations, however, lose much of their force, when the shop symbol proves to have eluded reference even in these pages. Nevertheless, the quest repays itself by revealing a wealth of anecdote centering about the wineshops of other days, comprised notably, in the *Collection of Rare Stories*, and *The World's Anecdotes Newly Told*, from which we are tempted to quote a few examples, though they bear but indirectly on our subject.

It was, of course, to be assumed, from the number of hallowed spots reverently pointed out to the traveller as the meeting-places of the poets of one age or another, that the Chinese *literati*, no less than

the famous wielders of pen and brush elsewhere in the world, were wont to foregather at the wineshops, inns and restaurants of their respective periods. Moved partly, perhaps, by the desire for human intercourse, they were most certainly impelled thitherward by the thought of quaffing of the fluid so universally apostrophized as the ideal stimulant to the divine afflatus—not to say its most reliable fount of inspiration, as Tu Fu intimates in *The Drinking Genie*, in which he says of his famous colleague:

“Li Tai Po can write a hundred poems after drinking a barrel of wine;  
He sleeps in the market restaurant in Changan;  
And even at the Emperor’s summons he does not button his robe.  
Li calls himself the ‘Genie of Wine’.”

From this and the foregoing characteristic bit of verse, one readily conjures up these ancient rendezvous, as a sort of theatre in which were constantly being enacted a multitude of amusing scenes and incidents. Such as these are suggested in our extracts from the aforementioned volumes, their atmosphere being that of the Tang and Sung dynasties. Their perusal provides, also, the means of contrast with the wineshops and restaurants of present-day Peking which many of our readers will have glimpsed, and whence, alas! things of the imagination have fled, while politics or commerce, rather than the promptings of the spirit, hold undisputed sway. Strictly speaking, the identification of the Ching Dynasty devices employed by these latter forms the essential object of the expedition upon which we shall be setting out presently; but the reader will doubtless find it not altogether without interest, as a preliminary, to direct a brief backward glance at the favourite haunts of the personages whose genius made the Golden Age of Chinese literature.

Before serving up our Tang Dynasty titbit, from the *Collection of Rare Stories*, by Hsieh Jung Jo, a word of explanation is in order, with regard to the term “market restaurant,” as it is rendered in the stanza from Tu Fu’s *The Drinking Genie*. Literally, the Chinese characters 旗亭, signify: “tower with a flag,” which, from the functions of the building or buildings so designated, might also be translated “town tower,” or “market tower”; for here were the centers of business, the markets, and the amusements of a city—and equally, of course, the bars and restaurants. The custom still obtains in the interior of



China, and its influence may be observed, in a measure, in the "bazaars" of Peking, where every human want may be satisfied, from edibles to drugs, from undergarments to jewelry and precious stones, toys and curios; or in such modern structures as the "New World," in Shanghai, where half-a-dozen theatrical performances, in as many dialects, are being conducted simultaneously, while restaurants, teashops and stalls are plying their busy trades, amidst the hubbub peculiar to Chinese crowds.

It is, at all events, in one of the ancient "market restaurants" that the scene is laid in our offering from the tales by Hsieh Jung Jo. Paraphrased, the story runs as follows:

In the time of Kai-yuen (Tang Dynasty, A.D. 618-936) there were three poets, Wang Chang-ning, Kao-shih, and Wang Chih-huang, to whom both the public and their contemporaries had meted out an exactly equal portion of fame. But, far from feeling any sense of rivalry the one toward the other, the three were the best of friends—in fact, boon companions, much given to frequenting the drinking places of the town.

One day, having set out for the express purpose of pouring out libations to their several Muses, they had made their way to one of these resorts; and were no sooner seated, than there entered a bevy of ten sing-song girls, summoned to entertain a party of banqueters. After the girls had passed on to their appointed places, the three poets held conclave together, saying:

"Each of us is famous as a writer of poetry. Let us now harken to the songs of these maidens, and whosoever's verses shall be oftenest heard therein, shall be proclaimed the best poet amongst us."

Almost immediately the singing began, the first words being these:

"'Tis cold and rainy on the river.  
On such a night I entered Wu."

Without waiting for more, Chang-ning raised his hand, made a mark on the wall, and remarked, complacently: "A verse of mine."  
The song was soon finished, and another voice followed:

"As I open the chest (containing relics of the dead)  
The tears are streaming down my cheeks."

And at this, Kao-shih promptly drew a line on the wall, saying: "A verse of mine."

Presently came the next song:

"The dawn sweeps in,  
For the Palace gates are opening."

Whereupon Chang-ning, still more complacently remarking: "Two verses of mine," placed another mark beside the first one.

Chih-huang now became impatient, and pointing to the prettiest of the singers, said: "If the song of this girl be not one of my poems, I shall henceforth forever refrain from competing with you two." To add to the suspense created by this attitude of Chih-huang, there now came a pause in the singing; but presently it was the very girl of his choice who lifted up her voice, and sang, charmingly:

"The Yellow River, seen from a distance,  
Seems to flow downward from the White Cloud."

At this Chih-huang laughed aloud; and spent the remainder of the day in drinking.

From *The World's Anecdotes Newly Told*, by Liu Yi Ching, (Early Sung, one of the Six Dynasties, A.D. 420-427) we cull the following quaint tale of two friends, Mr. Yuen and Mr. Wong An-fung. In the original, this is an example of that somewhat short-lived school of literature called the "Style of the Six Dynasties," which produced the prose-poem, consisting of sentences arranged in pairs, according to the tones of the words.<sup>6</sup> The story runs as follows:

Mr. Yuen, it appeared, had for neighbour, a man blessed in the possession of a very beautiful wife, in whom Mr. Yuen felt the keenest interest, and whom it was difficult for the husband to guard as carefully as he might have wished, for she worked as a barmaid at one of the resorts in the town. When the two friends made this discovery, they took to spending much time in the place; and Mr. Yuen contracted the singular habit, when drunk, of leaning against the lady and falling asleep in this attitude.

"Her husband was at first a little suspicious," relates the writer, naively, "and determined to set up a secret watch." But finding Mr. Yuen "with no other intention," he concluded finally that "there was nothing to be afraid of!"

In all of this there is no actual reference to the signs displayed by the wine dealers of those days, though, for want of any indications of the contrary, one may assume them to have been of the inscribed-flag order, which one learns from the *Shui Hu Story*, by Sze Nei-an, of the Yuan, or early Ming Dynasty, were used by the wine shops of that later period. The wording of the messages borne by these banners, is sufficiently interesting and characteristic to warrant description, in the course of which we shall be following in the wake of the hero, one Wu Sung.

After several days' travel, so runs the tale, Wu Sung came to a place in the outskirts of Yangkohsien, tired, hungry, and generally disposed to welcome the sight of a wineshop, where a flag hung before the door. On the flag were written five characters, reading: *San Wan Pu Kuo Kang*: "If you drink three bowls of wine, you will be unable to pass yonder mound." This was in evident and distinct contradiction to the old proverb, which declares that "three bowls of wine can set everything to rights."

However, be that as it may, Wu entered the shop, set his traveller's staff against the wall, and taking a seat, called to the shopkeeper for wine. The latter placed before Wu three bowls, a pair of chopsticks, and a dish of cooked vegetables. Then he poured wine into one of the bowls, filling it to the brim. Wu promptly took up the bowl, drank off the contents, and remarked: "This is really very strong drink, Mr. Shopkeeper. Give me something to eat which will satisfy my hunger, and go well with the wine"; and he glanced without interest at the dish of vegetables.

The shopkeeper replied, saying: "We have naught but cooked beef."

"Very good," approved Wu Sung. "Give me two or three catties." (A cattie is about one and a third pounds, English).

The shopkeeper accordingly went into the cookhouse, brought out two catties of beef in a large dish, and placing it before Wu, filled the second bowl with wine, which after drinking, Wu pronounced to be, "Fine wine!"

Thereupon the shopkeeper poured wine into the third bowl, which Wu quickly emptied, and demanded more. But the shopkeeper ignored his command. At this Wu waxed wroth, struck the table with his fist, and cried loudly again for more drink. Mine host,

however, only replied: "Beef you may have, as much as you want, but more wine I will not give you."

Wu's remark, after the first bowl, that "this is really very strong drink, Mr. Shopkeeper," seems to suggest that he may have been served with *Shao Chiu*, the native brandy, in which case the inscription on the flag would seem to have been very much to the point. This, it may be mentioned here, is the familiar "Samshoo," which we shall be discussing presently.

However, the admirable attitude of the shopkeeper in setting his own limitations upon the consumption of his liquid fire, was by no means common among the innkeepers of his day; as is evidenced by what follows, which has more of the atmosphere of the poetry of the period.

Wu Sung, in a furious rage, it appears, departed the shop of the obdurate wine dealer, took to the road again, and after falling upon some adventures which we are obliged to pass over, found himself at a crossroads, where stood a large wineshop. Close by, a tall pole bore a sign inscribed with four characters: *Ho Yang Feng Yueh*, meaning: "Spend a happy time here in drinking wine of the best quality."

Beyond was the shop, with a railing in front, painted green, on which were fastened two flags, coloured gold, on each of which five characters were written. Their message was: *Tsui Li Ch'ien K'un Ta, Hu Chung Jih Yueh Chang*, or, "From the depths of intoxication the heavens appear to expand; from the bottom of the cup the days seem to lengthen." Behind the railing, at one side, was a butcher's block, and at the other, a cooking stove. Within, in the shop, three huge wine jars, in a row, were sunk into the ground to about half their depth. All were filled with wine to more than half their capacity. A long counter occupied the middle of the shop, and there were tables and stools; and contentedly seated here, we must leave Wu Sung to the enjoyment of the hospitality he had so persistently sought—and fancy him making rapid progress toward a mood of unqualified endorsement of the latter half of the proverb which maintained that "three glasses help one to understand great doctrines; and perfect intoxication scatters a thousand troubles."

In the face of all the evidences of a universal and sustained enthusiasm, on the part of the Chinese, for wine and its apparently



much-to-be-desired effects, it is rather interesting to reflect on the fate that overtook the discoverer of intoxicating spirits. This irrevocable contribution to life under the Celestial Empire was made by an official of the court of Yu the Great, founder of the Hsia Dynasty (2205-1766 B.C.); but far from winning him renown, or even preferment, it caused his instant dismissal from public service, so great was the displeasure of his illustrious sovereign. When issuing the decree Yu Huang-ti is said to have prophesied that the day would soon dawn when "the liquor would cost someone a kingdom"; and the words were recalled, when the dynasty collapsed under the reign of Chieh. This was the monarch whose concubine, the notorious Mei Hsi, having contracted a playful fancy for drunken revels, had caused a lake in the palace grounds to be filled with liquor; and thereafter it became a palace custom periodically to gather together some thousands of persons, and at a given signal, to have them plunge into the lake. "They jumped in and drank like cattle," says Li Ung Bing, the Chinese historian, "and their subsequent conduct formed the principal amusement of the king and his concubine."

Thus the conviviality of the Chinese is plainly shown to hark back to antiquity; yet, curiously enough, throughout the centuries of its indulgence the question of vintages appears never to have had the slightest charm for its devotees, though they held wine to be "the proper drink for men, as grains are the proper food for pigs." Noteworthy, too, is the fact frequently commented upon, that intoxication has come to be the rarest of public sights in China to-day; wherefore the present race of Chinese is credited, quite deservedly, with being a conspicuously abstemious one. And, meanwhile, the production of wine and spirits is a continuously pursued industry; though from this point of view, the medicinal and religious functions of wine must be taken into consideration.

In casting about for reasons, in connection with the peculiar indifference to vintages, one is inclined to accept the old saying, "Rich or not, it is my country's wine," as probably expressing exactly the national and uncritical attitude toward the product, which, it occurs to one to mention for the benefit of the tyro in Chinese dinners, appears to accord far better with the native diet, than does the juice of the grape brought in from alien lands. But let not the foreign guest be deceived, on overhearing the command of his host for

"Old Wine!" This most popular of brands proves, on inquiry, seldom to have more than a year to its credit; though "samshoo," says a Customs report, "is often buried in the ground to 'ripen' for three or four years." Ten years, indeed, is regarded as a very considerable age for even the choicest of Chinese wines. To experience this, however, one must ask for *Shaohsing Chiu*, which variety (indicated in Sign No. 3) alone attains to the dignity of age, though it is not designated by the name of "Old Wine." (*Chiu* is the word for wine, but, in the common speech, it is used as a sort of generic term, and applied also to distilled liquor.)

The Western palate, admittedly, finds it difficult to acquire to any appreciable extent, the taste for Chinese wines; yet the opposite is true of the Chinese, among whom foreign wines have long since established themselves.<sup>6</sup> Their importation was inaugurated, in fact, in the early days of the Christian era, and has progressed steadily, without, however, exerting any influence on the question of native vintages. Thus the only real affinity in viewpoint between West and East is shown in an amusing alliance in spirit, between an old Chinese adage and the reply of a defender of the American institution known as the "before-dinner cocktail," to whom the question had been posited:

"Is the cocktail really necessary?"

"More than necessary," was the instant and emphatic rejoinder.

"It is *indispensable*—as a means of starting the conversation."

In Chinese, the same thought is expressed thusly:

"No wine, no company; no wine, no conversation."

But reverting to the search for causes underlying this peculiar characteristic of Chinese wines, nothing seems more logical than to attribute it to processes of manufacture, which are seen, on examination, to be quite different to those pursued in the West. The fact that, in effect, they are such as to preclude the storing away of the liquors for any extended period was simply, but graphically indicated to the writer by a wine dealer, in response to the question: "Since wines are improved with age, why do you use them so soon after they are made?"

For reply, a finger was laid on the neck of a full bottle that stood before us on a shelf. "After ten years," said the demonstrator, "the wine would reach to here"—indicating a point about a quarter of the way down; "after twenty years, here," and the finger travelled down—

ward another three inches. "And in thirty years?" he was asked. The finger left the bottle altogether, and there was a waving about of the arms. "Nobody could drink it," said the merchant, making a grimace, and dramatically acting the part of a person whose mouth, throat and inner regions were being devastated with a burning fluid.

"The production of spirits from grain," says Alexander Hosie, in his volume entitled *Manchuria*, "is the same in principle as elsewhere, but the (Chinese) process is vastly unlike that practised in the West. The various operations are not so clearly differentiated, since with the exception of distillation itself, they proceed together at the same time, and grain in different stages of decomposition is mixed in the same receptacle."

As regards the production of wine from rice, the process consists in first steeping the grain in water, for periods varying from three days to three weeks. The glutinous rice is used, and before being put to soak it is cleaned, softened and sprouted. After steeping, it is usually boiled, and when this mass has cooled, the ferment, which the Chinese call "medicine" is added, as well as a quantity of the grain in other stages of decomposition. The large earthenware jars into which it has been poured are then covered, and left while the fermenting process takes place. Then comes the filtering, through cotton bags, or straw, the liquid being drawn off into other jars, and finally bottled. Sometimes it is this liquid which is boiled, and in this case, it is bottled while hot. It is then stored away for a year, before being disposed of. Wines so prepared are classified as yellow and white, the former ranging in colour from yellow to the tint of sherry, and the latter being better when it is slightly yellowish, as this indicates that it is not too new. The southern provinces of Kiangsu and Chekiang produce the bulk of these fermented wines, while the distilled liquors emanate from Newchwang and other parts of North China, and Manchuria, where kao-liang (sorghum) and millet, and other grains from which it is made, are grown.<sup>7</sup>

The afore-mentioned volume on *Manchuria* contains an interesting description of methods governing the production of the famous "Samshoo," 1,600,000 gallons of which spirit are estimated to be produced annually in South Manchuria alone. Following is a condensed summary of the author's special study of the subject:



In the preparation of the fermenting agent, the paddy husks, in the case of rice wine, or the barley, millet and kao-liang husks, for wines made of sorghum, are ground up with the grains, the three latter being mixed with peas in the proportion of three parts of the former to one of the latter.

To the ground-up grain and husks, water is added, to produce the consistency of putty; and this is pressed firmly by foot into wooden moulds, like those used for brick. These grain bricks are piled up in a room, with interstices between, for the passage of air, as is done in a brick kiln. 6,000 to 10,000 bricks are made and piled up at a time. The room must be secured from draughts, and the matter of light and heat given careful attention. Gradually a fungoid growth forms on the surface, and the skill of the operator must be exercised to maintain the proper temperature and moisture, so that this change will permeate the entire substance of the bricks. This may call for repiling the lot, the opening of windows, the use of artificial heat, etc., etc. The entire process consumes about 40 days, and the bricks, when properly dried, retain their active properties for five or six years. Enough for a year's supply must be made, as the process is not possible to carry out in winter; and in the average distillery will be found, in the season, from 10,000 to 20,000 of these bricks, besides the material in process of preparation.

In the distillation preliminaries, the grain is crushed and moistened, after which a quantity of the ferment, ground fine, is added and thoroughly mixed with it. The whole is then put into pits, in layers, and each layer tramped down. Next comes a covering of chaff, and last of all a layer of moist clay. Beneath this the chemical changes take place. For 18 days the contents are tramped daily, to keep the grain in close contact with the ferment. At the end of this period, the grain is partially decomposed, and ready for the first distillation; but it is successively subjected to the action of the ferment five times for periods of nine or ten days before it is regarded as refuse, and each time a quantity of raw grain is mixed with each layer.

The still, whence issues the national supply of samshoo, is extremely primitive in construction. It consists of a round-bottomed iron pot, six feet in diameter, and filled to three-fourths capacity with water. The furnace underneath is fed with the stalks of the grain, which burn quickly and require constant replenishing. Over the iron pot is fitted



a wooden box, with a screen in the bottom, on which the grain rests, about a foot above the level of the water. The top rises toward the centre, where there is an opening over which is set the leaden condenser. The latter rests on a gutter running round the circular opening of the lid. When the water boils the steam passes up through the spirit-laden grain, and carries the spirit into the curved bottom of the condenser, whence the liquid trickles into the leaden gutter and into the descending tube of the receiver.

The native method is regarded as a highly wasteful process; for, whereas one picul of grain should yield 112 catties of spirit, the Chinese distiller seldom produces more than 65 catties. But time, labour, and material-saving considerations have little weight with the Chinese, who with amused tolerance for the notions of this strange creature, the foreigner, receive all suggestions inspired by Western conceptions of efficiency, with the ever ready answer, "But, after all, why?"

Such was the experience of the newly-arrived American lady missionary, in her earnest efforts at starting a current of thought along the lines of reform, in the mind of one of the leaders in the enormous pig-raising and exporting business centering about Chang-chun, in Manchuria.

"Don't you know that, by other methods, you could take care of twice the number of pigs in the time you are expending on these?" was the gist of a lengthy talk setting forth some of the main points on cattle-raising as it is practised in the West.

Her listener had throughout maintained the characteristically Chinese air of polite attention; but perplexed curiosity had dawned early in the conversation, and at the conclusion of the speech it expressed itself in the question:

"But who ever told you that a Chinese pig cares anything about time?"

And similarly, as regards a minor detail, in the case of the traveller who, while being shown over one of the distilleries, was much perturbed by the presence of prowling dogs—evident consumers of the refuse—whose numbers apparently ran into the hundreds.

"Why do you keep so many dogs?" asked the naïve visitor. "There must be two hundred of them in sight at this very moment!"

"Are there that many, really?" was the surprised rejoinder, and the proprietor looked about him as though taking stock for the first time. "Well," he answered readily, in the next breath, and shrugging his shoulders, "we never count them. But they do multiply, evidently. There never used to be that many!"

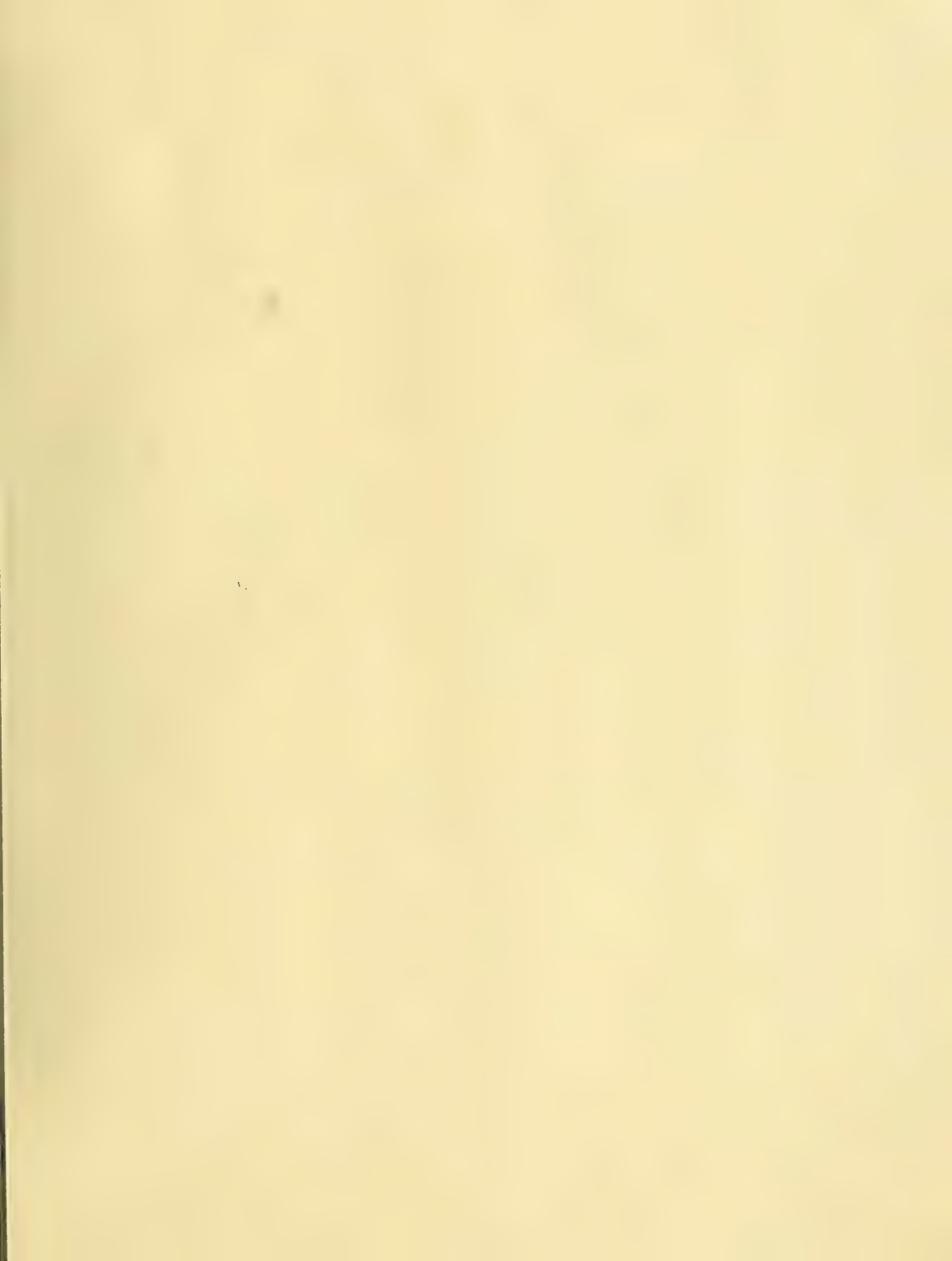
It is when confronted, on every hand, with the evidences, either of the manufacture, or of the sale of wine and spirits, that the paradoxical nature of the comment on the abstemiousness of the Chinese presents itself, justifiable though the remark undoubtedly is. It is, of course, to the introduction of tea-drinking, and the gradual growth in public favour, of this beverage, that this highly creditable state of affairs is to be attributed, whatever may have been the deterrent effect of Imperial prohibitions by successive dynasties, "against the excessive use of intoxicants." As far back as 1122 B.C., an infusion made from another leaf enjoyed considerable popularity for a time; but the leaf now known as the "tea-leaf" did not come into general use until the fourth century A.D. The custom of serving tea at court originated with the Sungs (A.D. 960-1280); and extending thence to the yamens throughout the country, as the inevitable accompaniment of official visits, it soon became that distinctive feature of Chinese social life and etiquette, which has since delighted generations of foreign residents and visitors.

\* \* \* \*

We must now, however, proceed with our tour of the streets of Peking, in search of the wineshops of the capital, not for the purpose of exploring their interiors, which would be dull enough work after our excursions into the past; but with a view to examining the present-day signs, which will be seen to be quite different to those with which we have been dealing.

#### THE PEKING WINESHOP.

The three devices with which our collection of shop symbols is introduced to the reader, (facing page 17) though they do not in the least resemble each other, do, nevertheless, equally spell the word "Wine" to the native Peking public. As compared with the large majority of symbols that engage the fancy with the usual Chinese subtlety of suggestion, the first and last are among those referred





*The "South Chinese Wine" shop.*



to as open to criticism on the score of obviousness. In form, they represent the pewter flagons which act as containers, each of a special variety of wine, and when thus displayed, their message is direct and to the point. The maximum of the trade of such a shop would be the sale of the wine for use in the home, or wholesale to other dealers; though frequently, tables and chairs are to be found within, for the accommodation of the itinerant thirsty.

#### WHITE WINE, WITH RICE.

When, however, the red and green colour note is added to the flagon, as it is in the case of No. 1, it signifies that the species of wine heralded by the shape of the container, is to be imbibed on the premises, and that, furthermore, rice is served, if desired—which it usually is. The representative varieties of these mild, fermented rice wines, which contain about ten per cent. of alcohol, are indicated in the three symbols on this page of illustrations.

#### THE "YELLOW WINE" RESTAURANT.

In Sign No. 2, we come upon one of the apparent enigmas that leads one to take refuge in the guild idea, when seeking to apprehend its use as a wineshop symbol. It is the sign of the restaurant keeper, who dispenses *Huang Chiu*, Yellow Wine, as an accompaniment to the meal. The device is made of heavy cloth suspended from a wooden bar; and in general design it resembles the banners which are the votive offerings of the devout, and are hung near the altar in all temples. They are also to be seen in funeral processions. The symbol does not resemble the inscribed flags we have encountered, and contrasts vividly with other wineshop signs—partly, perhaps, because it signifies food, as well as yellow wine.

But there is another thought that is suggested by its peculiar and mystifying form: In ancient times, one recalls, the wines offered among the sacrifices in the ancestral temples, and during the funeral rites, were not of the ordinary variety, imbibed on any and all occasions. They were, on the contrary, prepared according to special and very complicated recipes, this being one of the lost arts of China, owing to the disappearance of the formulæ, and the unsuccess of many attempts to produce a satisfactory substitute. The deduction,

therefore, that this may have been the device employed by the dealer in sacrificial wines seems to account, not unreasonably, for its decided resemblance to the "soul banner."

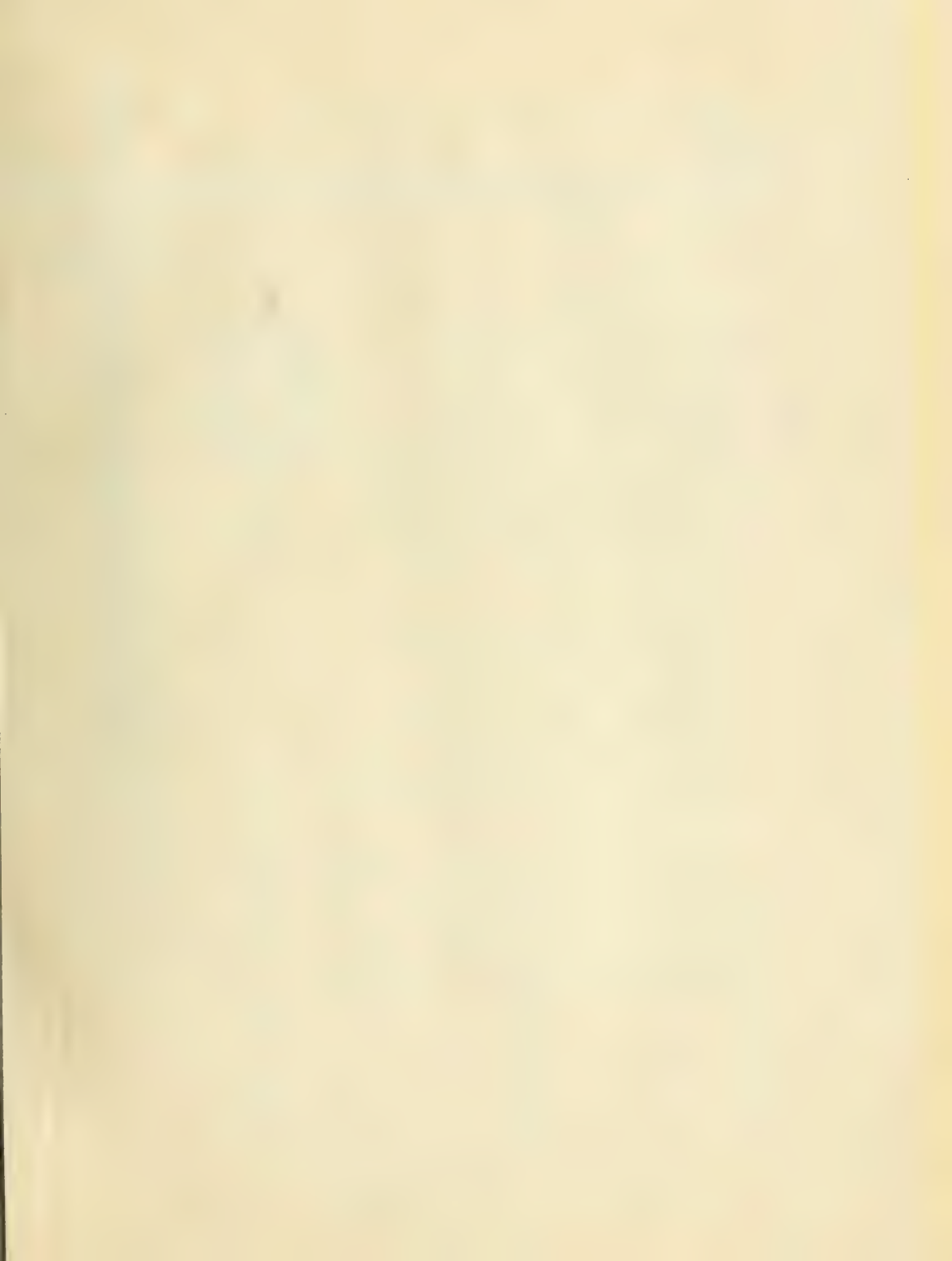
The device, at all events, serves to remind us of the important place occupied by wine in the religious ceremonies of China. In little bowls numbering anywhere from three to ten, it is invariably to be found among the articles set out on the altar table to be offered in sacrifice to the gods, or to ancestors; and to be sprinkled over the paper money, the incense, and the embers of the paper images and trunks of mock money burned during the funeral rites. The wine offerings, in fact, are believed to be held in special favour by the spirits in honour of whom any given ceremony is dedicated; and at the spring and autumn services in the Confucian temples, libations are poured upon the ground by high government officials, in the course of the ritual observed in memory of the Great Sage.

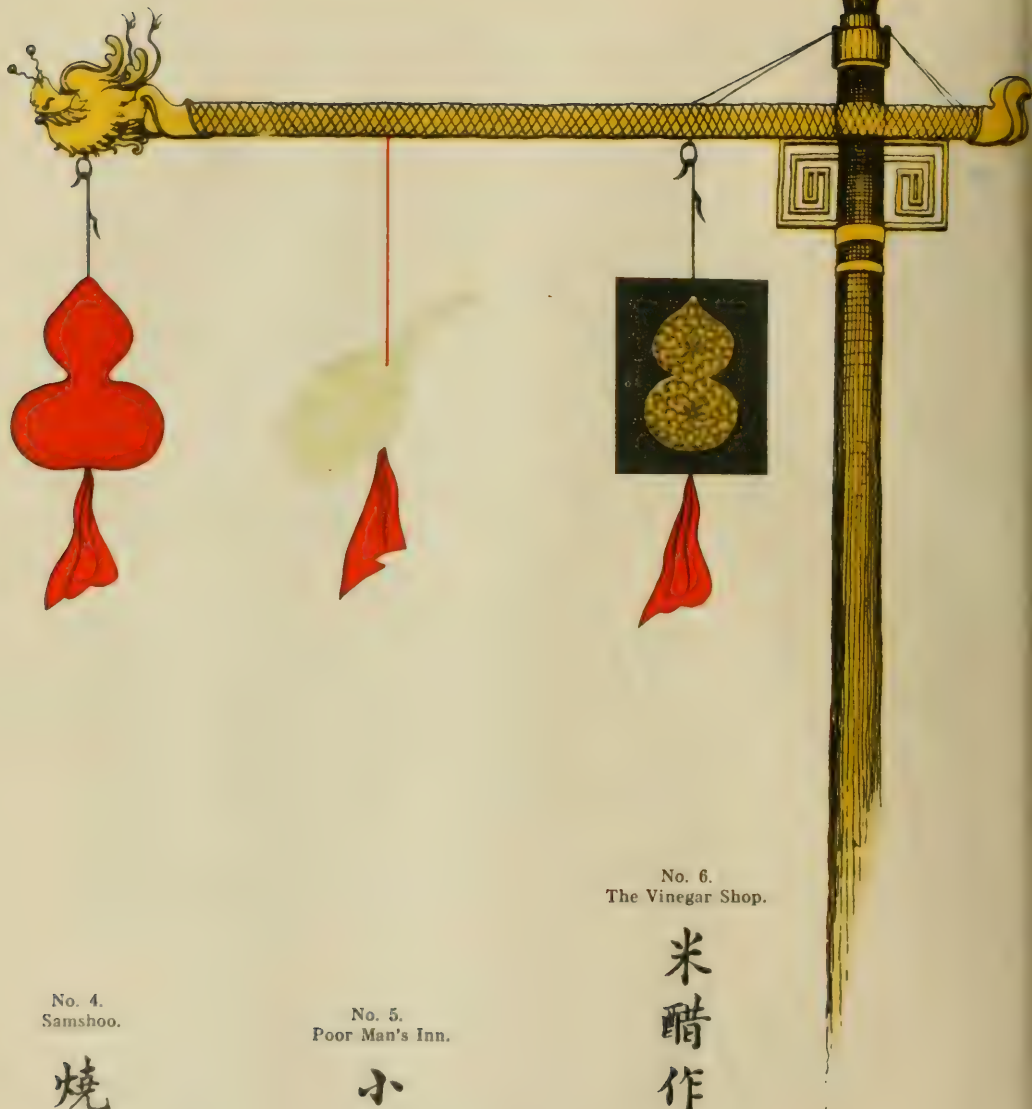
#### SOUTH CHINESE WINE.

Although our artist has written the words *Shao Chiu*, (Samshoo) beneath Sign No. 3, he at the same time contributes a note to the effect that the flagon signifies "South Chinese" wine, which is delivered to the purchaser in a container of this design. It may be assumed, therefore, that this is the famous *Shaohsing Chiu*, to which we have already referred as the choicest of Chinese wines. It takes its name from the district in which it is made—Shaohsing, in the southern province of Chekiang, whence it is exported to all parts of China, as well as abroad, notably to Australia and California. Foreign experts have pronounced the first grade of *Shaohsing Chiu* to be not only the best of Chinese fermented liquors, but one that is "comparable to Spanish and other wines."

#### SAMSHOO.

On the next page of illustrations, in Sign No. 4, appears the Red Gourd, or Pilgrim's Bottle, the symbol used by the dispenser of *Shao Chiu*, "burnt wine," also known as *San Shao*, "thrice fired," although we have seen that it is more commonly five times distilled. This, as we have already explained, is the Chinese brandy; and in





No. 4.  
Samschoo.

燒酒幌子

No. 5.  
Poor Man's Inn.

小店幌子

No. 6.  
The Vinegar Shop.

米醋作房幌子



view of its much-advertised potency, due to the forty-five per cent. content of alcohol, it is reassuring to reflect that in the figures recording the total annual consumption of wines and liquors by the Chinese, samshoo is indicated by only 30 per cent.

It is the latter name, *San Shao*, which the foreigner has distorted into "Samshoo," this being one of the first features of Chinese life to impress itself upon his attention. Whatever may be his judgment of its virility, the word *shao*, in this connection, has some of the meaning of "concentrated, fiery," added to "strong."

In the *Stories of Wu Ling*, a Sung Dynasty novel by Chow Mi, occurs an interesting reference to a signboard that carries some of the suggestiveness of this definition of the word *shao*. Before the door of the Inn of the Green Striped Toad's Eye, it appears, there hung a sign bearing the legend: "Only good wine is sold here." But the most prominent feature of the *tiao pai* (signboard) was a painted reproduction of a green striped toad, described as having great protruding eyes that bulged with anger! Here would seem to be a far more expressive symbol of the qualities of *shao chiu* than the gourd for all its redness.

But, in any case, this use of the "magic gourd" of fable as a wineshop symbol, is in itself a pleasantly significant touch, and one that may be taken as a mark of high regard for the particular character of its contents, since it was in these calabashes that the ancient alchemists were in the habit of storing their Elixir of Life. The experimentation with chemical combinations by which the inevitable was to be evaded, and the search for the Spring of Perennial Youth, were among the most industrious pursuits of ancient China. Most of the famous monasteries rejoice in the possession of a bubbling well of this description, and a gourdful of the magic waters is carried away by the devout pilgrim.

But more than this, there were gourds that, according to legend, small as they were, were capable of "holding a thousand persons," and, in fact, the universal itself. Such, at all events, were the contending claims of the Monkey God, Sun Hou-tzu, and a group of demons, for their respective treasures; though it must be admitted that neither was actually tested, since it was by trickery that the devils were outwitted. Ascending into heaven, Sun obtained permission to "extinguish the light of the sun, moon and stars for one hour," and by this bit of

strategy succeeded in deceiving the short-sighted demons into believing his, Sun's, the better gourd. They eagerly took it from him in exchange for their own, only to find it spurious, and themselves divested of one of their five magic treasures—the fan, to which we shall have occasion to refer presently, the vase, the rope, and the sword, besides the gourd.<sup>8</sup>

This mere suggestion of one of the many legends in which the “magic gourd” figures will be sufficient to fix the Samshoo dealer's emblem in the reader's mind as one having more than ordinary significance, though it is easily distinguishable from its illustrious prototype from the fact that the latter is always a natural yellow, in tint.

### THE POOR MAN'S INN.

The neighbouring device, Sign No. 5, hangs outside the lodging house of the lowly, and represents the over-night refuge of the itinerant artisan, the travelling mender of shoes, the street barber, the knife-grinder, the wheel-barrow man, the bamboo-pole carrier—in fact, the whole working world that carries the implements of its trade, and its workshop, on its own shoulders; constantly on the move, from village to town, and on again, and when overtaken by nightfall, setting down its pack at the Sign of the Ladle—for such is the form of this symbol.

Partakers of Chinese dinners will be familiar with this item of Chinese and Japanese tableware, half spoon, half dipper, and made, for such uses, of porcelain. When it is made of bamboo strips, and is of much larger size, it becomes a strainer, with which the universal macaroni, vermicelli, noodles, etc., are lifted from the huge round trough in which they are boiled, and transferred to the waiting bowl of the humble patron of the shop where the kettle steams the livelong day, within easy reach of the street, beyond the sign indicated by No. 9.

When, however, its proportions are heroic, and it is suspended at the door of an humble dwelling, it does not signify that such food is to be obtained within, but merely that the rude facilities for its preparation are provided. Along with the night's shelter, this involves the expenditure of not more than five or six coppers, at most. Thus, this constantly changing company arrives at this species of inn, either after having fed at such a shop as the one just mentioned, No. 9, or else bearing the ingredients of its meal, some sorts of which may have been purchased on the streets, while a variety of other kinds are

to be found, half-prepared, according to this peculiarly Chinese custom, among the shops we are about to describe.

\* \* \* \*

As we move along, from symbol to symbol, the reader's attention will naturally be caught by the little triangle of red cloth that flutters so engagingly beneath the majority of the devices, suspended by one of its corners. Inquiry as to the meaning of this feature, which as will be observed, does not always appear, provoked much interesting discussion, and many theories. As nothing authentic could be produced the reader may make the choice that appeals most to him.

One suggestion advanced was that the touch was added merely for "look-see," and, if one thoughtfully examine a random assortment of the symbols, including those from which the red cloth is absent, one can but acknowledge the influence of the designer.

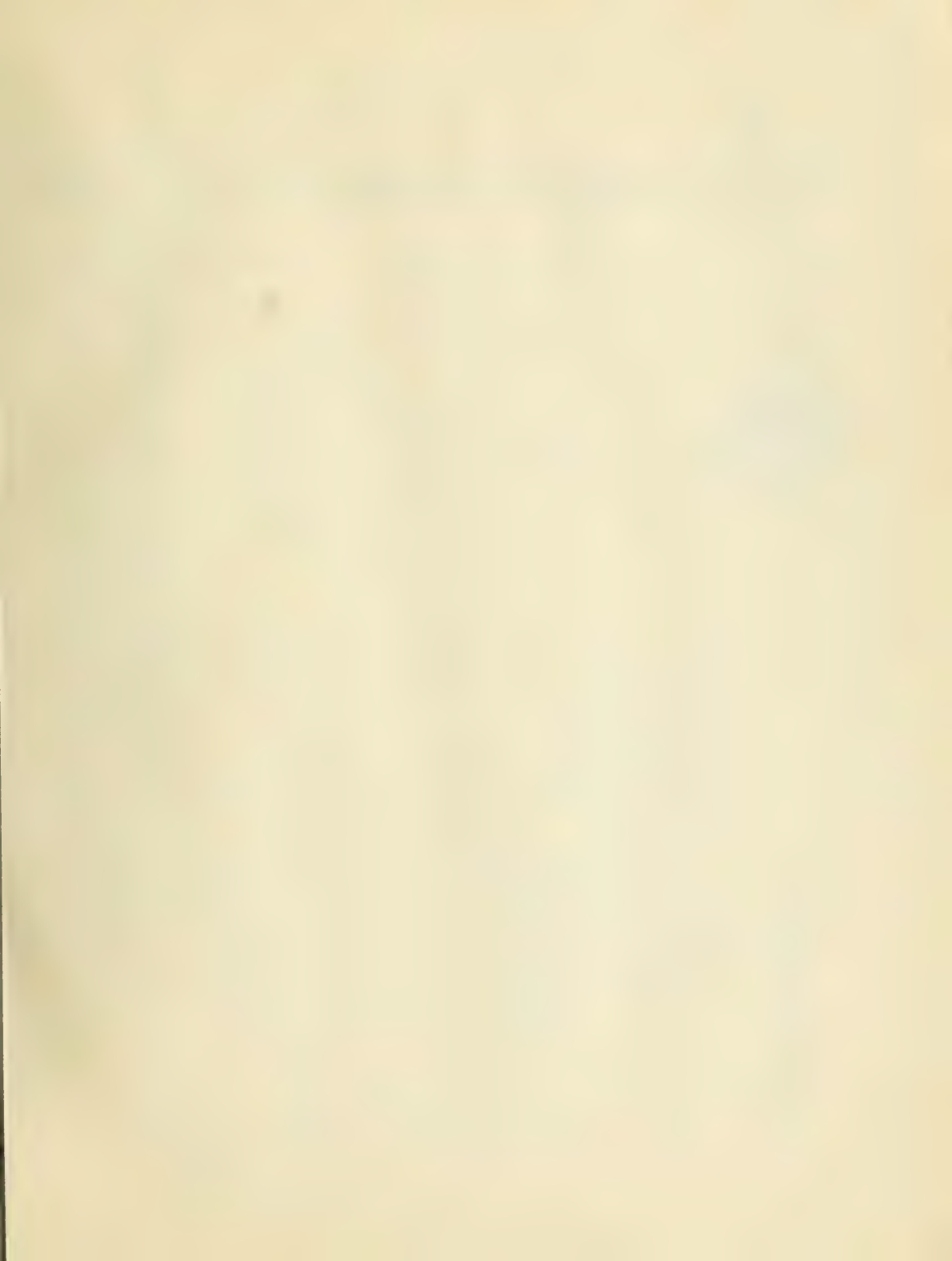
Another opinion gave voice to the practical mind conceiving it. This was to the effect that it was added to attract attention, red being the colour with the greatest long distance carrying power. As to this, we shall find possible support in certain symbols appearing further along, in the chapter on Money.

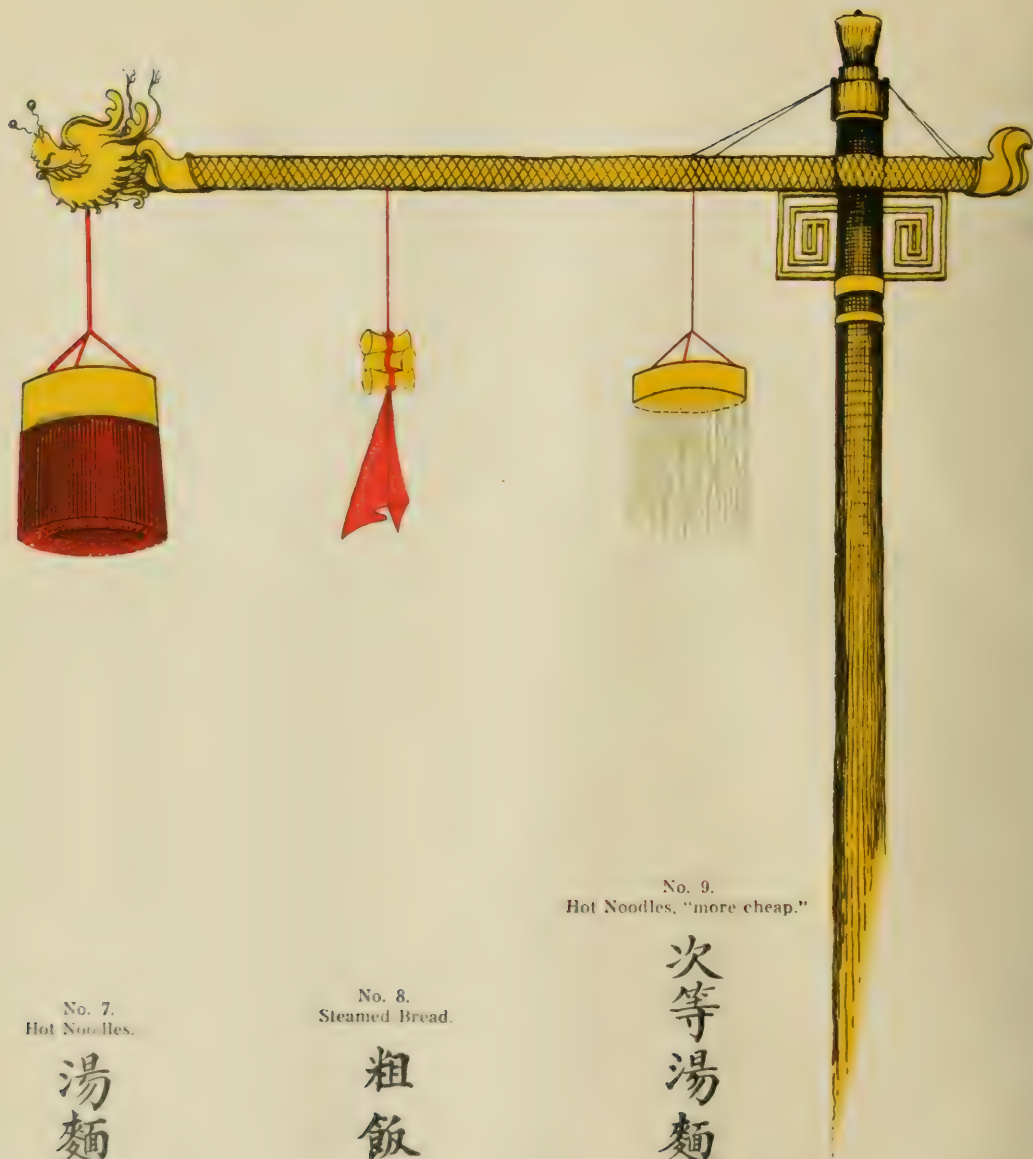
But the most attractive of the explanations emanated from another type of mind, in which the conviction was strong that the attachment of the bit of cloth had to do with the significance of the colour, which, according to this interpreter spells success and happiness, generally; and therefore, the red background for weddings, the red New Year cards for the conveyance of good wishes, and the spots of vermilion painted on the baby's face.

This interpretation, however, scarcely covers the true significance of the colour. Red is universally credited by the Chinese with the power of dispelling evil influences; but in addition to this it has its place in the symbology of the seasons. As blue, the colour of spring, symbolizes promise, so does red, the colour of summer, signalize fulfilment, consummation. White and black are the colours of autumn and winter respectively, but of this we shall have more to say in a subsequent section.









No. 7.  
Hot Noodles.

湯麵鋪幌子

No. 8.  
Steamed Bread.

粗飯鋪幌子

No. 9.  
Hot Noodles, "more cheap."

次等湯麵鋪幌子

## *Chapter Three:*

### *Foodshops.*



**T**HAT much of the food consumed by the masses of the Chinese people appears to be constantly in process of preparation at the hands of professional cooks, in myriads of public kitchens and foodshops, is usually among the first puzzled comments one hears from the thoughtful traveller in China. "Everywhere," writes an English author, "there are shops packed with a wonderful assortment of foods; more foodshops and more food found in a day's tour of the streets of a single city, than one would expect to see in a lifetime elsewhere!" The deduction it seems natural to make from these displays, which, to be sure, are more impressive in the larger cities than elsewhere, is that among the generality of poor Chinese, comparatively little cooking is done in the home. And when one reflects on the population figures of this vast country, and on the number of small foodshops created evidently by some demand, whatever it may be, it is easy to imagine, if one has not actually witnessed it, the spectacle presented

at feeding time, when the narrow Chinese streets are crowded with a multitude of hungry workers, of both sexes, and all ages, intent upon besieging the stalls in search of "prepared," or "semi-prepared" foods. Such is the classification of the shops that form a part of these scenes from the dramas of the workaday world, though it also should be mentioned that many of the delectable morsels exposed for sale therein are by no means intended for consumption by the labouring folk.

This remarkable popularity of public cookshop, temporary food-stall, and "travelling kitchen" is to be accounted for, one is told, by the fact that cooking facilities, in the homes of the lower classes, are extremely limited, owing to the scarcity and costliness of fuel. But, on taking into consideration the nature of the entries in this national food exposition, one is inclined to seek further for its *raison d'être*. May it not, one asks oneself, proceed from some fundamental urge, such as, for example, the undoubted demand of the Chinese palate for an infinitely greater variety of flavours than is either known to, or desired by, that of the Westerner? In Chinese opinion, by the way, the relative merits of foreign and native cookery, and their respective claims to rank among the fine arts, are to be measured by the fact that a three years' apprenticeship is required to qualify a cook for employment in a Chinese household, while three months is said to be sufficient to equip him for the foreigner's service. Arbitrarily drawn as these lines may be, the truth is that the foreign-educated Chinese, even after long residence abroad, returns to his native diet with avidity, pronouncing that of the West both tasteless, and of a monotonous sameness. Hence the unpopularity of the foreign hotels in China, among the Chinese, except for temporary stopping-places.

It is but natural, therefore, that these tastes and fancies should be found descending in the scale, from the rich to the poor; and this being the case, it becomes obvious, in view of all the conditions, including the long hours of labour in China, that the public cook and his products represent an absolute necessity of the working people, for more reasons than one. It is a conclusion that, at all events, seems logically to account for the bewildering array, in the ready-to-cook foodshops catering to the lowly, of vegetables and fish cut into chunks, and dubiously coloured, to the alien eye, from the various sauces in which they have been steeped. We shall presently be examining, in its proper



turn, the device (No. 10) by which these shops are identified; meanwhile, however, pausing for a moment, before proceeding on our tour, to follow the aforementioned author's lively description of the method of hawking fish in Canton, where the vendor carries a flat dish strung from the pole on his shoulder, with the fish swimming contentedly, as he calls his wares.

"Soon, the hawker's cry is answered from a balcony above. Down goes the dish on the pavement, and a basket on a string descends towards it. The basket contains a coin, for which a fish is exchanged. The hawker passes on, and again there comes a cry—this time a different note. Immediately there is a stir in the alley; a crowd gathers. Down drops a line with a small hook attached, and a coin, larger than the first buyer's.

"The hawker takes the hook and baits it with a small piece of shellfish. Then the buyer hauls up the line a little way, and skilfully drops the bait and hook into the centre of the dish. The fish are startled, and keep close to the edge. The crowd presses close and the excitement increases.

"A big, red fish overcomes his nervousness, and edges towards the bait. He is a fifty-cent fish, and the coin lowered was a twenty-cent piece. If he takes the bait and is hauled up safely, the buyer gets him for twenty. While the big red fish philanders, a small black-and-gold comrade swims ahead of him, and steadily eyes the bait. A gambler in the crowd offers even money on black-and-gold. Thereupon bets are exchanged in all directions, with the big red the favourite. The noise is appalling!

"More and more fish move around the bait, as their fear is overcome. A rush, a tug, and a lovely green fish with purple spots goes sailing upwards, amidst cries of delight and disappointment from the crowd. Alas! although he is so beautiful, he is not sweet, and his value only ten cents. The wily hawker had him ready, starved for a day or two, and the prize fish all well fed. Bets are settled with laughter, and the hawker goes his way, calling what is probably: 'Fish, oh! Fish, oh! All alive! Red fish, blue fish, green and spotted! Fish, oh!'

But now, having dallied with the general aspect of this question of food purveyance—sufficiently, perhaps, to convey something of the insistence with which the business thrusts itself upon one's attention in China, at every step and on every hand, we are at last brought

face to face with the "minute particular," which to us takes the form of the stationary food stall, and the devices by which the dealers' offerings are instantly identified by the hungry. And suppose that, by way of easy progress in the examination of these, we imagine ourselves following, discreetly and unobserved, the peripatetic artisan, who is bending his steps in the general direction of the "Sign of the Ladle," where he means to spend the night, and where he knows no food is awaiting him.

#### THE VINEGAR SHOP.

It is possible that he would pause, at the outset, at the sign, No. 6, which adjoins that of the lodging-house on the same page of illustrations. This is the shop of the dealer in vinegar, certain varieties of which we found mentioned as obtainable at the "Garden of Perpetual Spring."

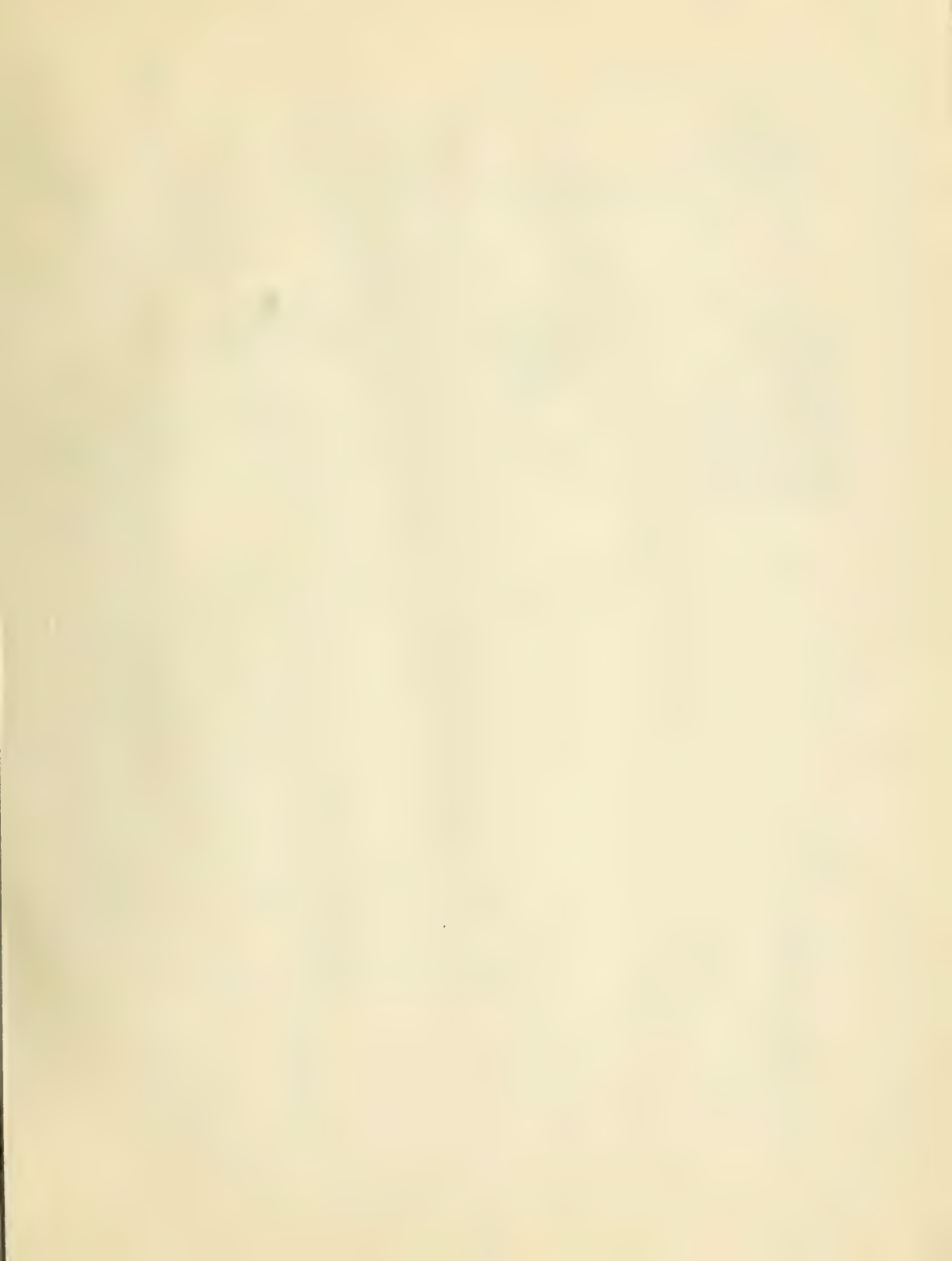
The emblem of the wine-dealer, which flanks the Ladle to the left, will be seen to be reproduced in the sign of the vinegar merchant, to indicate, perhaps, the foster-brotherhood of the two commodities. But, in this case the pilgrim's bottle, or "magic gourd," is done in gold, against a plain black board, its effulgent glow seeming to bring out with almost cruel emphasis the crudity of its modest neighbour, in one of those violent contrasts to which one grows accustomed in China.

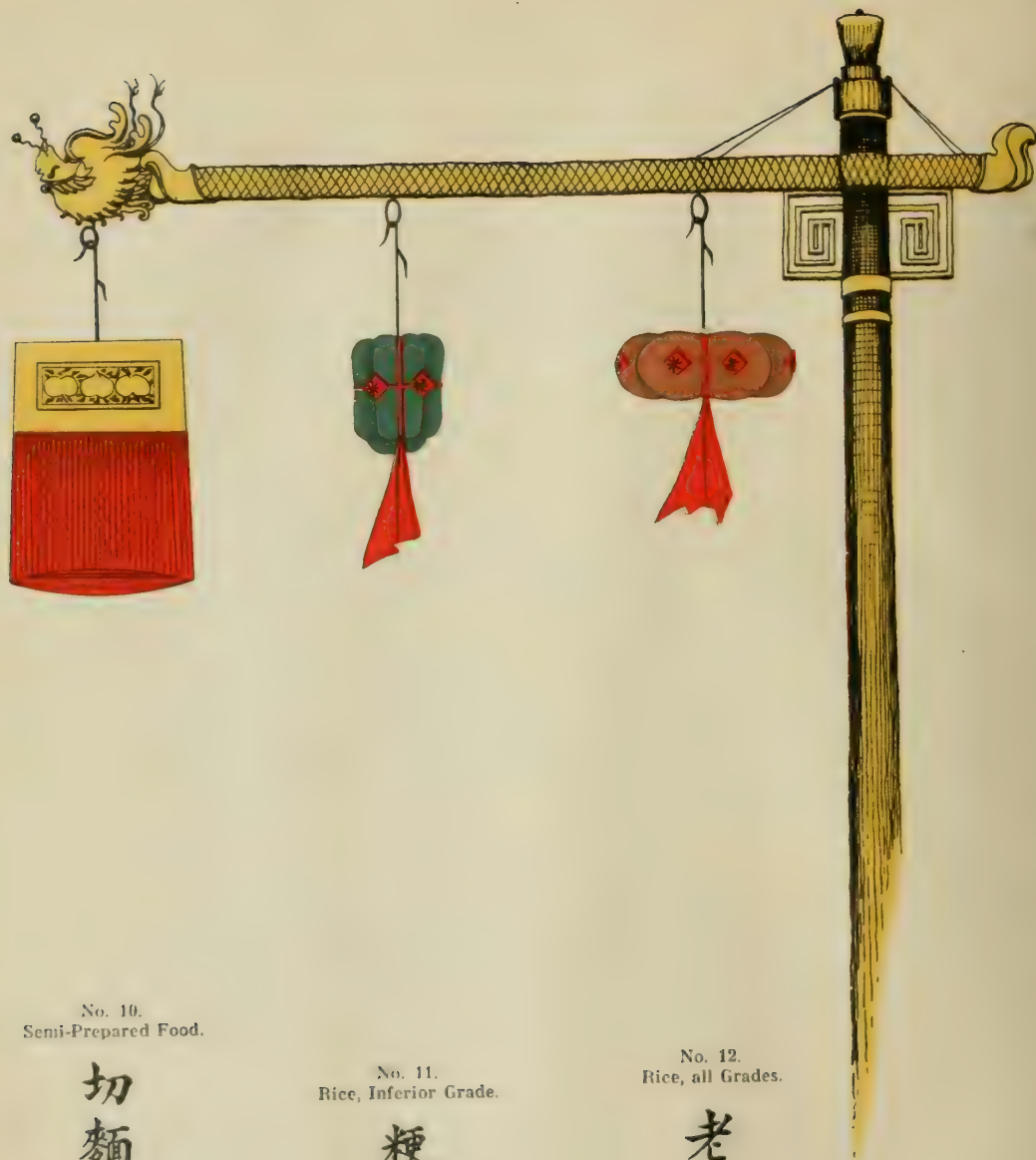
#### READY-TO-EAT FOODS.

Perhaps our travelling knife-grinder, or shoe-mender, or whatever he may be, in the weariness of a mind preoccupied with the problem as to how and where he shall fill the yawning chasm in his interior, will have decided to settle the question promptly by indulging himself at the prepared-food shop. Or, again, it may be that one of the three signs, Nos. 7, 8, and 9, will chance to be the first to meet his eye, and thus determine the matter for him; for such is their significance.

#### NOODLES.

No. 7 tells him that the dealer's stock of boiled macaroni is somewhat more varied, and of a slightly better grade than the noodles dispensed at No. 9, this distinction being attained by means of a





No. 10.  
Semi-Prepared Food.

切麵鋪幌子

No. 11.  
Rice, Inferior Grade.

粳米幌子

No. 12.  
Rice, all Grades.

老米幌子



more carefully made emblem, in which as will be seen, the circular yellow frame is much larger than in No. 9, and the red paper fringe, descending therefrom, considerably thicker. Superiority, one is fain to admit, could not well be more clearly suggested, and by these tokens No. 9 stands charged with dealing in nothing but a single variety of the cheapest grade of steaming hot noodles; while at No. 7 flour, salt and dried vegetables may be purchased, as well as noodles.

If the restaurateur caters also to the Mohammedan public he indicates the fact by introducing a touch of blue into the colour scheme of his sign. This usually takes the form of a bit of cloth, or a tassel attached to the device or hung up beside it. But now and then he appends as well, a cup or other food vessel, whereon is inscribed his guarantee that the regulations prescribed for the preparation of food for followers of the Moslem faith have been strictly observed.

#### STEAMED BREAD.

But, supposing that, one and all, these beacon lights of promise will have signalled in vain the unconscious object of our scrutiny, who now spies, perhaps, not far off, symbol No. 8, consisting of three bits of wood, painted yellow, and bound together with an enticing triangle of red cotton cloth fluttering beneath. This engaging device proclaims the presence of the little mounds of steamed bread, whose production and consumption appear to proceed by perpetual motion; and doubtless he will be disposed to munch one or two of these, in the company of the surrounding crowd of coolies, and others of his ilk, while continuing to debate with himself the advisability, after all, of ready-cooked food.

And should he in the end, decide to prepare his own meal, on arriving at the "Sign of the Ladle," let us observe him in his search for the elements which he will there put together, in the utensils supplied by the house, and cook over a small stove, either in the street before the door, or in an inner courtyard, if the dwelling possess one—or, again, in the cookhouse possibly attached thereto.

#### READY-TO-COOK FOODS.

The chances are ten to one in favour of his fancying a titbit or two, from among that already-referred-to assortment of sombre-hued

vegetables and fish; hence he would be on the watch for such a sign as No. 10—which as may be observed, bears a certain resemblance to No. 7. As in No. 7, the colour note of No. 10 is red and yellow, and there is a similar red paper fringe, but instead of being circular, No. 10 is flat, and on its rectangular face, painted yellow, is a design traced in black, in which naïvely appears the peach, the symbol of Long Life.

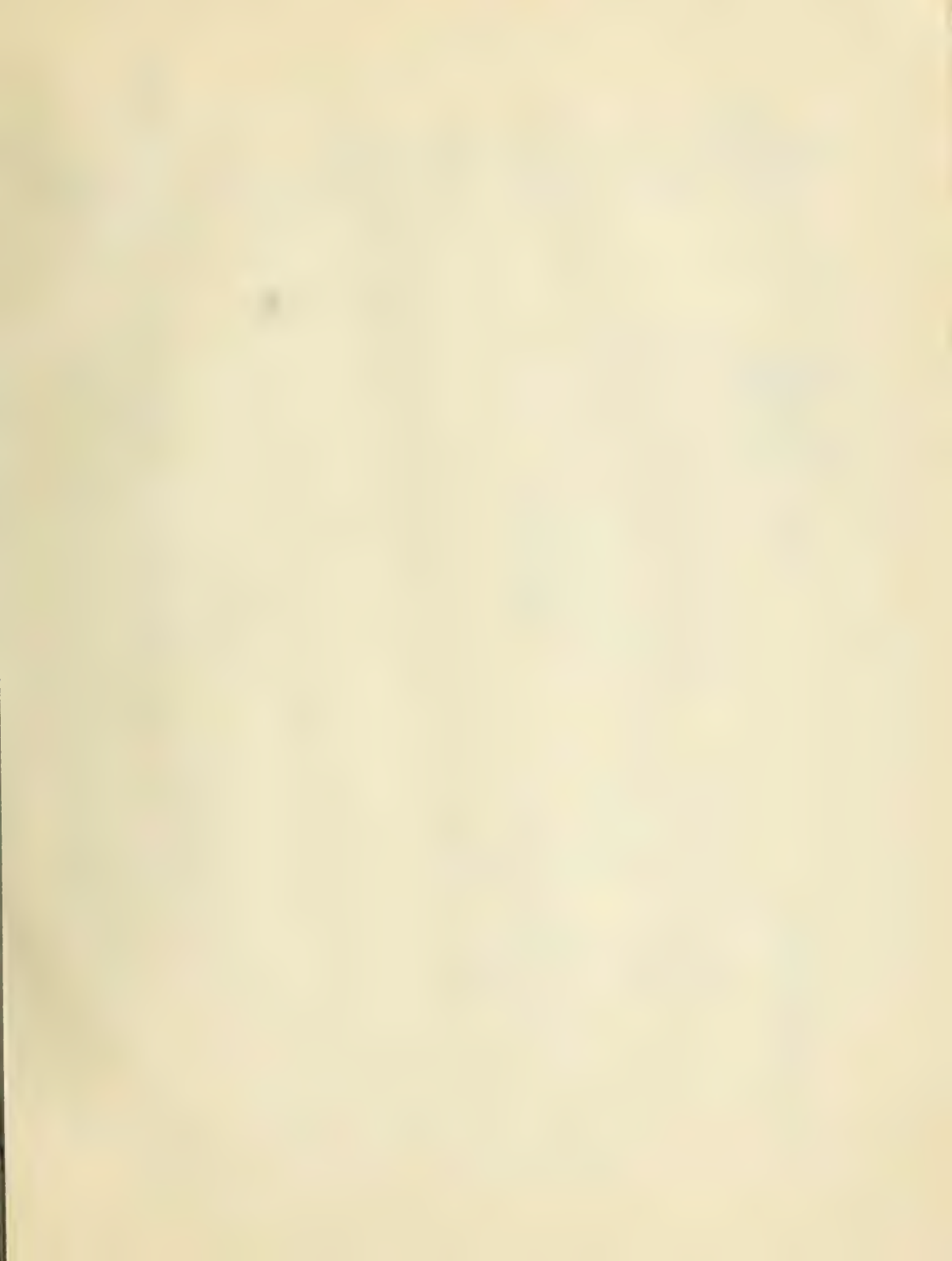
“Buy your prepared, ready-for-cooking food here,” it says to the initiated; and its proprietor doles out from an apparently inexhaustible supply, an endless succession of small portions into the bowls of such as present them, or wraps little heaps of them in squares of coarse brown paper for those, who, like our hero, do not. Obviously, it would not be a high class of food, and therefore would be suited to the purse of such as he.

#### RICE SHOPS.

It is probable that a certain quantity of rice would be among the things of his desire—if not exclusively so—and in this case, the green object, No. 11, with tiny squares of red running round its middle, would attract his notice. This is the sign that distinguishes the inferior grade of that one-time universal article of diet in China, which civil wars, strikes and profiteering are gradually converting into a luxury; though it is true, also, that among farming folk in many parts of the country, far distant from the districts in which it is raised, rice is not eaten, from year's end to year's end.

No. 12, whose form suggests an old-fashioned footstool, is likewise the sign of the rice-shop. It signifies that the dealer's stock comprises all grades of the staple, including the best, or *lao mi*—old rice—meaning that which is allowed to mature, and, moreover, is properly grown. This was the variety referred to in the “Peace within the Seas” signboard.

And now, with his packet of rice added to his other modest, if highly-flavoured purchases, all of which he carefully stows away in some corner of the little shop which he carries on his back, we may allow our humble traveller to depart; and, having watched him cheerfully shoulder his pack, and make his jingling way towards





No. 13.  
Noodles, Uncooked.

麵  
鋪  
幌  
子



No. 14.  
Congratulatory Cakes.

蒸  
鍋  
鋪  
幌  
子



No. 15.  
Rice Cakes.

糕  
乾  
鋪  
幌  
子



food and rest, we may now turn our attention to the shops that, from this point, mount to the plane of the general.

#### DRIED NOODLES.

Having this poor but vastly contented object of our just-concluded observations still in mind, one feels a vague stir of sympathy—misdirected because he would be far from comprehending it—on coming upon emblem No. 13. This is the sign of the dealer in the best quality of macaroni—the “Number One” grade of the staple that vies with rice in popular demand, but which in this degree of excellence is beyond the reach of the lower classes. The Chinese taste in ready-made macaroni runs the gamut from vermicelli to three or four thicknesses beyond, where it stops, the larger sizes seen elsewhere, seemingly having no appeal to the Chinese.

It is interesting to encounter in China this familiar industry, which one had thought to be peculiar to the sons of Italy, of whom one is further reminded, again and again, on actively experiencing the Chinese taste for garlic. Why this object—made of wood, and coloured a bright yellow, with its own outline repeated in the centre in vivid blue, edged with red—should announce the presence of “noodles,” while its form appears to reproduce a section of the crown of one of the heavenly kings, is one of our unsolved and delightful mysteries!

#### CONGRATULATORY CAKES.

The neighbouring device, No. 14, is one of a number of cake-seller's emblems; and, by suggesting the indulgence in an occasional luxury, it would cause our lowly friend to recede still further from view, were it not for several important features it displays that have a profound, and in fact, a life-and-death significance to the Chinese; so that it is probable that even he must, now and then, make his way to this shop.

Here is the dealer in the steamed cakes that were mentioned under the sign of the “Tavern of the Harmonious Heart.” Their interior is filled with sweets, while on their upper surface are stamped the various characters that stand for happiness and good fortune,

done in vermillion, as suggested in the picture. Ostensibly they constitute good wishes in the concrete, and, as such, are exchanged among friends at birthdays, and on other family festival occasions. But, to grasp their real meaning one must analyse the elements of the dealer's sign, which is one of the most interesting of the symbols.

First of all, it must be pointed out, that its delicate tints, while seeming pleasantly to invite the less grave considerations of life, are by no means intended merely for decorative effect, for every stroke of the Chinese designer's brush, both as to colour and line, has a symbolic significance. Hence, the peach, appearing on the two squares above and below the central disc, and symbolizing longevity, is tipped with red, while the white background prevailing throughout the sign, signifies purity. On the centre of the disc itself appears the medallion of millet-seeds, which denotes a numerous progeny, while the green of the leaves duplicates the tint of the nethermost object, that purports to be made of green jade.

Perhaps the reader would ask: why the bit of jade, appended to the sign of the cake-seller, when one naturally associates it with questions of personal adornment. The answer is, that this is a very special sort of cake, a symbol in itself, whose functions are involved with, and explain, the use of the piece of jade; for this most precious mineral of the Chinese is held to be imbued with the power of arresting the physical deterioration of the body. It was their philosopher's stone, as well; while gold was believed to contain the elixir of life. Both these minerals belong to the *Yang*, or positive element (as against the *Yin*, or negative), and hence jade, being the concentrated essence of *Yang*, may be taken as the symbol of life.

In a subsequent chapter, we shall have occasion to observe the operation of this belief, and the practices to which it led, which included the placing of bits of jade and gold into the mouth of the dead as a means of infusing the body with vital energy: the belief being that during a certain period after death the soul, composed of *Yang*, is considering a return to its earthly habitation, whose strength was thought to be maintained by the agency of these minerals. (In the relation between soul and body, *Yang* would be Spirit, and *Yin*, Matter).

From this it will not be difficult to deduce that these cakes are expected to attract and diffuse the elements of *Yang*, which is per-

haps, a rather deeper thought than one is accustomed to look for in birthday wishes, generally. At the same time, the symbols of longevity and posterity, in the dealer's sign, acquire an added significance, finished off as they are with the touch of jade.

Ancient custom also prescribed the pulverization of jade—and pearls and gold, as well—and various preparations made therefrom were eaten, or drunk. Perhaps the act of Egypt's illustrious queen, in dissolving and quaffing her priceless gems was inspired by a similar belief in their life-preserving qualities. It is unlikely, however, that our dealer's sign intends to convey the claim that a decoction of jade enters into the composition of his cakes.

The peach, which contributes so attractively to the decorative effect of this emblem, has crossed our line of vision before; and as such instances tend to multiply rather than diminish as we proceed on our way through China, it may be as well to refresh the reader's memory as to the origin and significance of this familiar detail of Chinese design.

The literature of ancient China abounds in legends centering about the peach tree, most of them based on myths ascribing an extraordinary age—sometimes reaching to ten thousand years—to trees encountered by fabled personages in regions vaguely located in the "East," or the "West." In one of these recitals, found in a fourth century work, the *Shen I King*, or *Curious Things about Spirits*, it is related that the elixir of life was extracted from the stones of peaches growing on a tree that stood five hundred feet in height, with branches eight feet long, from which depended fruit that measured three feet around.

The basis of all the legends, however, is of Taoist origin; though the peach has its place, also, in the story of Kuan Yin, the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy. As the latter figures in Buddhist art, so does the equally lovely and beloved Hsi Wang Mu, "Royal Mother of the West," appear in painting, porcelain, or stone carvings expressing the faith of the followers of Lao-tze. And she it was who distributed the most marvellous of all peaches.

In the grounds of her palace in the Kun Lun Mountains, this mythological queen of the celestial paradise of the Taoist, and patron saint of conquering heroes, maintained an orchard of peach trees, where she was wont to receive her favourites, and present them with



branches, or fruit. Among those who were so honoured were the Chou Dynasty Emperor Mu, and the Han Emperor Wu; and in the records of the latter it is related that during his visit to the "Royal Mother" he had been shown trees thousands of years old. Approaching one of these, which, she explained bore fruit only once in three thousand years, she plucked a number of its choicest specimens (one wonders if they might have been of the three-foot variety!) and graciously bestowed them upon her visitor, pointing out, however, that it was only in the celestial regions that such trees could be grown.

The Kuan Yin legend of the peach belongs to the period of the goddess's earthly existence, when, as the Princess Chunda, she had incurred the wrath of her father, King of Hsing-lin, first by her indifference to royal pomp, and finally by her utter refusal to marry the prince whom her parent had chosen for her husband. The enraged King thereupon decreed the execution of his daughter; but at the moment when the sword was about to descend, it was rendered powerless by a purple aureole—emanation of innate divinity—that appeared above the Princess's head.

Chunda, however, knowing that her father's anger was to be appeased only by her death, besought heaven to withdraw its protection. The Supreme Buddha answered her prayer by causing her spirit to pass painlessly at the moment when the bow-string of the executioner touched her neck. Upon this a fearful cataclysm of nature laid waste the country thereabouts. Mountains were shattered, trees fell, the light of the sun was obscured, and beasts and birds ran screaming through the forests. In the midst of this appalling confusion, augmented by the lamentations of the people of the whole kingdom, a tiger seized upon the body of the Princess and carried it away.

The soul wandered to the realm of Yama, God of Death, but, by his order, and with the aid of his angels, it returned to the body; and the Princess awoke once more, and found herself lying stretched upon the ground at the edge of the Ssu-tu Forest. An old man, with bulging forehead, a knarled stick in one hand, and a peach in the other (the reader will recognize this familiar figure as "Old Man Long Life") stood over her. After a time he helped her to rise, and talked to her of a purple bamboo grove on a sacred mountain (Hsiang Shan, Hui Chow). Here, he told her, she would find peace,



and attain to the true knowledge of Buddha's Law. Whereupon he presented her with a peach, and explaining that it would protect her from hunger, cold and fatigue, set her upon her way.<sup>9</sup>

#### NEW YEAR CAKES.

By way of reassurance to the reader who may have been subconsciously dreading the inevitable descent from Olympian heights to prosaic considerations, we hasten to direct attention to the points of similarity between the adjoining devices, Nos. 14 and 15, which, as we shall see, mercifully afford us a stopping-place halfway down the mountain, as it were.

In No. 15, the emblem of the dealer in rice cakes of a special variety, we have again the simulated bit of jade, this time at the top. Further down is the lotus, the thoughtful consideration of which immediately takes us into the intermediate heaven of the Chinese Buddhist, where souls are imprisoned in the calyxes of the lotus flowers, with which the quiet bosom of the Sacred Lake is bestarred, while they await the time appointed for their entrance into Paradise. (The subject is treated of in a subsequent chapter).

The cakes, however, are eaten alike by Buddhist, Taoist, Confucianist, or native Christian, at the New Year season. In the cities they are procurable in some of the shops throughout the year, but among the people of the country they are among the preparations for the New Year festivities, and are made at home. The rice is steamed first, and then chopped and made into a pulp with the addition of water, milk being employed in the composition of cakes, only by the Manchus. This is then cut into cakes half an inch in thickness, and of the length and width of the rice wafer of Japan. After this they are toasted.

Another variety of rice cake is eaten during the *Chung Yang*, or Longevity Festival, in the belief that they help to lengthen the span of life of the partaker. This one of the moon-worshipping festivals, when the nation's prayers for "long life" are offered from the tops of hills, mountains or any available eminence, is based on a Han dynasty legend. A great scholar, it appears, in response to a secret warning, escaped calamity by taking his family to the top of a high mountain, and on returning to his home found that all his domestic animals had been killed—instead of himself and his relatives, he was told.<sup>10</sup>

In celebration of this victory the air is filled with paper effigies of animals, dragons, and terrifying insects, *Chung Yang* marking also the opening of the kite-flying season.

Rice cakes of a special sort are also dedicated to His Majesty, the Dragon, and eaten during the Dragon Boat Festival, when, on the waterways everywhere are to be witnessed all manner of wonderful displays of boats shaped like dragons, the smaller ones engaging in racing, while the larger ones, magnificently decked out with myriads of silk banners, are made to whirl round and round in one spot, by oarsmen costumed in the robes of ancient days. Though it is generally believed to be a sort of memorial service in honour of the poet-official, who, in a fit of despair over the corruption of the government with which he had been associated, had killed himself by drowning, the festival is really a gigantic prayer for a good harvest as the result of the fecundating rains, of which the Dragon is the celestial guardian.

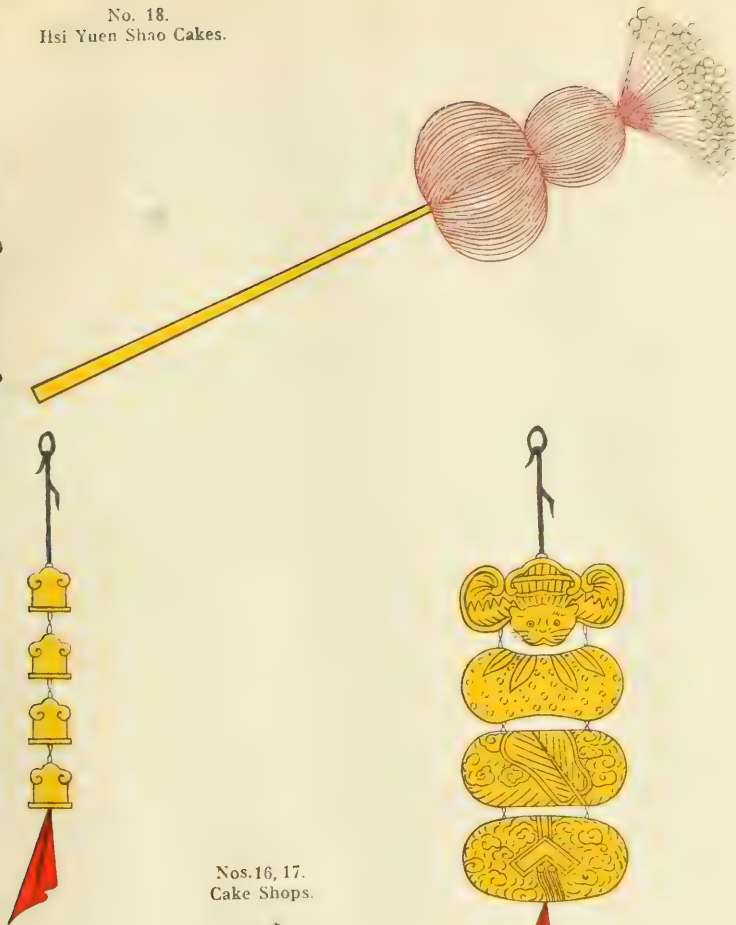
#### MORE CAKE SHOPS.

Nos. 16, 17 and 18, on the following page of illustrations, are also cake-seller's devices, the first two signifying the cakes, biscuits and wafers used at all seasons. Long rows of No. 16 are frequently seen, stretched along the front of the shop, and again one sees it supplementing No. 17, to indicate that the latter shop carries a varied stock. Any of the signs representing special varieties of cakes is also to be found hanging at the doors of tea-houses and restaurants where they are served. On the four lozenge-shaped objects comprising No. 17, by being strung together one above the other, and painted yellow, it is interesting to discern some of the most significant elements of Chinese thought, picked out in a tracery of black lines.

On the lower section are the familiar cloud effects, signifying immortality, and the jade triangle that figures prominently among the instruments whose music is heard at important temple ceremonies, such as are conducted annually at the great Confucian Temple in Peking, when the President comes to pay his devoirs at the splendid shrine of the Great Sage. This "Hanging Musical Stone of Jade," it will be remembered, is one of the familiar group of "Eight Precious Articles," the others being: a jewel, a cash, a lozenge (symbol of

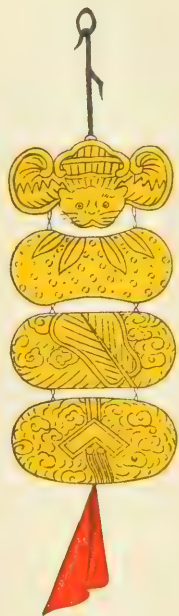
點心舖元宵幌子

No. 18.  
Hsi Yuen Shao Cakes.



Nos. 16, 17.  
Cake Shops.

點心舖幌子







victory), a pair of books, a painting, a pair of rhinoceros-horn cups, and an artemisia leaf. In our first chapter we found these articles entering into the composition of eye medicines, dispensed at the "Temple of the Happy Mean." Above the Musical Stone, on the next section, appear more clouds and a suggestion of waves, as the background for the "magic fan" one of the five treasures of the demons whom we encountered recently, in the Myth of the Monkey God.

Like the gourd, the magic fan was a powerful instrument wielded by both the good and the evil spirits of Chinese legend; and one of the most interesting of its adventures offers the possible explanation of its presence on the cake-seller's sign, as well as some of the suggestiveness of modern methods in warfare.

The reader will recall, perhaps, that the gods of the Chinese Taoist pantheon are headed by the Pearly Emperor, and that celestial affairs, generally, are administered according to a system which is an exact replica of the ancient imperial government on earth. That is to say, in the plan of the Other World were established an identical number of ministries and sub-departments, and every official, high or low, had his counterpart above. There were Ministries of the Stars, of the Waters, of Fire, of Thunder, Lightning, Rain, etc., of Medicine, Epidemics, Exorcisms, and so on.

An old Taoist hermit, named Lü Yüeh, who had become an Immortal, was President of the latter Ministry. He wore, usually, a red garment, had a blue face, red hair, long teeth and three eyes, and carried a magic sword. His horse was named "The Myopic Camel." In the course of one of his battles, however, he appeared with three heads and six arms, holding in his hands, besides the celestial seal, an assortment of plague microbes, the flag of plague, the plague sword and two others. In this instance, his faces were green, and large teeth protruded from his mouth. He was severely wounded in the battle by a goblin-dispelling whip and another magic weapon in the hands of his adversaries, but managed to make his escape, full of wrath and resolved to avenge his defeat.

This he sought to accomplish by joining an army corps, and surrounding the mountain near which they were quartered, with a system of "entrenchments and infection." The nephew of the Pearly Emperor, however, released his celestial hound, which bit Lü Yüeh

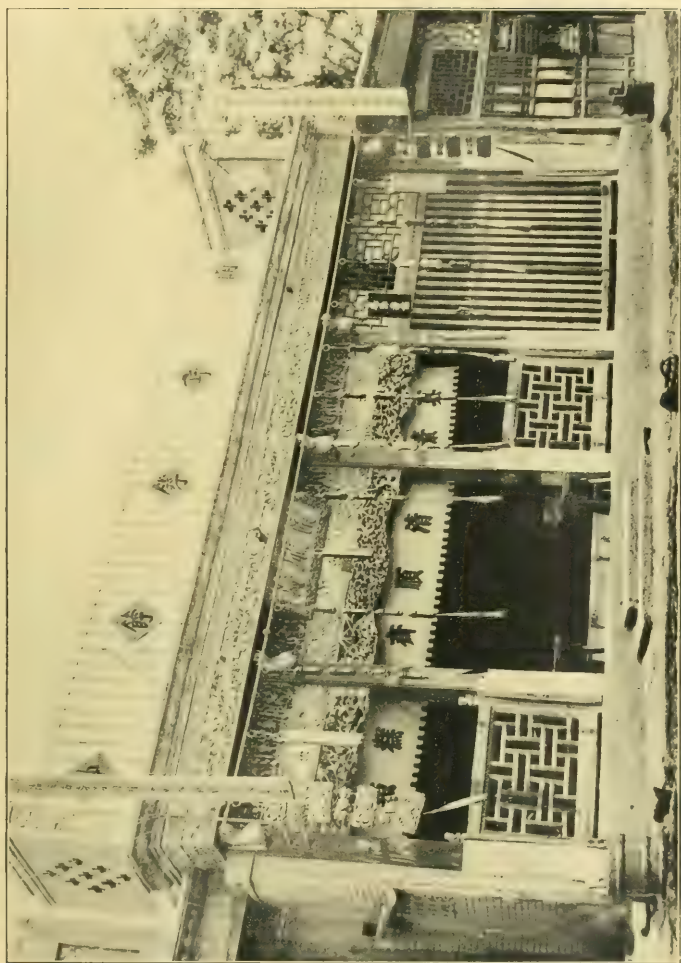
on the crown of the head. Then Yang Jen, the magician, armed with his magic fan, pursued Lü Yüeh and compelled him to retreat to his fortress. "Lü Yüeh mounted the central raised part of the embattled wall and opened all his plague-disseminating umbrellas, with the object of infecting Yang Jen, but the latter, simply by waving his fan, reduced all the umbrellas to dust, and also burned the fort, and with it Lü Yüeh."<sup>11</sup>

So much for the magic fan, as a dispeller of evil influences, in the cake-seller's sign. Above it is shown the pomegranate, symbol of success in life; and surmounting the whole is the head of the tiger, the beast that might almost be called sacred in China, from the superstitious regard in which it is held. As every part of its body is employed in the making of medicines, the killing of a tiger for any other purpose is considered the gravest and most nameless of offences, and one likely to incur the vengeance of the gods. Hence, as one can never be certain as to the attitude of the rulers over the spirit world, it is in fear and trembling for the possible consequences that a tiger is killed, even for these, that might be assumed to be legitimate reasons. It has often been asserted that the deforestation under which China suffers to-day is the result of the cutting down of large trees by the natives, in order to rid the country of danger from these beasts. But, meantime, they appear to be necessary to the prolongation of life, paradoxical as it seems. However, whenever one is killed, the body is taken to the nearest temple, where the hunters burn incense, and endeavour thus to propitiate the celestial guardians of tigers.

The tiger is also the God of Gamblers; and, watching over the gamblers, he is pictured, in this capacity, on paper scroll or wooden board, rampant, and clutching a "cash." His title is "His Excellency, the Grasping Cash Tiger."

#### "HSI YUEN HSIAO" CAKES.

The device No. 18, that occupies the top of the page connotes the whole series of spectacles that comprises the Lantern Festival, which concludes the Chinese New Year celebrations. It stands for the thin, sweet wafer which is prepared for and eaten during the holiday season, but particularly on this day, called *Hsi Yuen Hsiao*, if on no other.



*A Cake shop displaying two varieties of the cake-sellers' emblems.*



*A Cake shop carrying the smaller symbol only.*



It is this day which marks the end of the annual holiday and the beginning, on the day following, of another year's work, uninterrupted—except for a short period during the Dragon Boat Festival, six months later—for the general masses of the people, by the one-day-in-seven schedule of labour that prevails in the West, and is just beginning to be adopted by a few of the more progressive Chinese firms.

Why this emblem should instantly suggest the wafer, which it in no wise resembles, remains one of the unsolved mysteries. Made of thin, flat strips of bamboo, finished off on the ends with little balls of cotton wool, and caught together in two places, in a double balloon and plume effect, it is only supplementary to other cake signs, and is taken down again when the holiday season has passed.

#### THE "COMPRADORE" SHOP.

On the next page of illustrations is the sign, No. 19, that has been broadly interpreted as that of the "compradore," or something approaching the dry grocer's shop, which is known by this name among foreign residents in China. The eight character-bearing red squares, affixed to discs made of a network of bamboo, recite the wares of the merchant as comprising a prepared ginger, and all sorts of writing paper, as well as the coloured paper from which the flowers, and the lanterns used at the China New Year and Dragon Boat Festivals, are made. He also makes and sells the imitation money burned in memory of the dead, and the incense sticks and similar paraphernalia of temple worship.

Two of the discs make the broad claim that "any kind of article" may be purchased here, and the limitations not expressed are well understood by the Chinese. But, at all events, a very large share of the merchant's stock consists in the food products of the provinces, far and near; and includes dried fruits and vegetables, dyes, oil, vinegar and even wines.

#### BAMBOO SHOOTS.

The same sort of bamboo network and character-inscribed red square forms the two discs that in No. 20 advertise that great delicacy

in the north, the southern bamboo shoot, which reaches the capital after a long journey by water to Tientsin, travelling thence by train. The upper character is that which stands for white jade, the meaning of which characteristic touch the reader will readily interpret. The curious fact is that the Chinese use the word *yü* in referring to pearls as well as jade, the Pearly Emperor being called *Yü Huang-ti*.

#### HSIANG YUH—FRAGRANT OIL.

The golden disc adjoining, No. 21, hangs before the shop of the dealer in *Hsiang Yuh*—fragrant oil—or, in other words, the extract of the sesamun seed, the tiny and popular grain devoted to so many uses in China. As *Hsiang Yuh*, it forms the principal ingredient of salad dressing, as does the oil of the olive, in the West. When the seed is prepared with sugar, or with honey and almonds, it figures as a sweet, cut either into neatly rolled strips, or into squares. In the latter form it is well known in the West, to patrons of Chinese restaurants. It is also universally sprinkled over cakes. The four characters on the disc explain that the oil is extracted by grinding the seeds in a small mill, *hsiao moh*. But to the unlettered the characters are superfluous, as the colour of the disc tells its own tale.

Were it, instead, coloured in red—in which case the bit of red cloth would not float whimsically beneath—it would indicate the shop of the large, round cakes made of bean flour, which are not properly to be called cakes, since they are not sweetened. They are a familiar sight on the street stalls in the villages of the north, where the foreigner has dubbed them “cart-wheels.” They are consumed by wheelbarrow men and others engaged in heavy labour, and are the principal article of the midday meal of the hard-working poor.

Here is a nursery rhyme in which some of their properties are recited:

Round bean cakes, with red spots bright!  
The blind who eat them receive their sight.  
They cure the deaf and heal the lame,  
And preserve the teeth of the aged dame.  
The bald who eat them grow a queue,

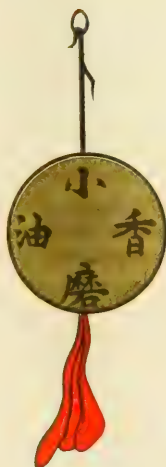
薑店幌子

No. 19.  
The "Compradore" Shop.



No. 20.  
Bamboo Shoots.

筍  
鋪  
幌  
子



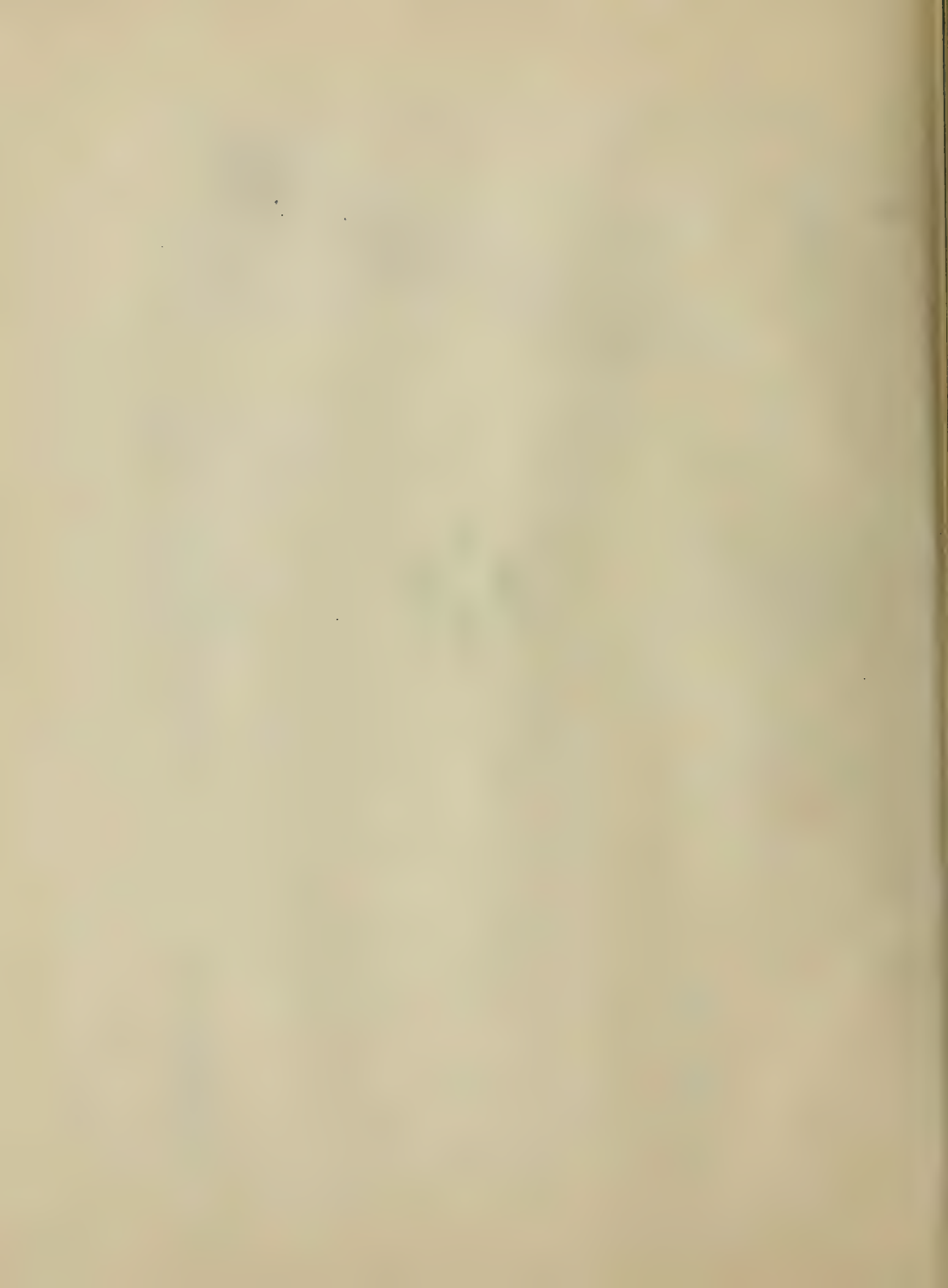
No. 21.  
"Fragrant Oil."

香  
油  
幌  
子



No. 22.  
Milk, Tea, and Mongol Cheese.

奶  
茶  
鋪  
幌  
子





And the priest can read his Bible through.  
The man who eats fears not his wife,  
And the woman works better all her life!<sup>12</sup>

#### TEA, MILK, AND MONGOL CHEESE.

The history of No. 22, the last of the food symbols, has been most puzzling of all to trace, and it may be of interest to recount the most noteworthy of its interpretations. The characters it bears read: "Milk," and "Tea," and when passed around at random, among numbers of Chinese in Shanghai, where its like has never been seen, it was amusing to add each new translation of its significance to those that preceded it, sometimes disclosing the latter, for the purpose of starting discussion.

It may be as well to mention, at the outset, that for the most part, the sight of the symbol produced nothing but a shake of the head on the part of the majority of those appealed to. But among the replies were the following: 1. A teahouse, where milk would be served on request. 2. A teahouse, simply, as Chinese are not in the habit of drinking milk. 3. A shop selling "foreign man's" tea, or that variety to which milk would be added, as compared to the native's brand of the beverage. 4. The interpretation of the Pekingese—or such among them, as were not stricken dumb by the question—is probably correct, and runs as follows:

The sign is that of a teahouse of an humble order, and of a special sort, since the symbol is unlike any teashop sign ordinarily used. The regular tea dealer has adopted the black signboard, with the single character for tea, painted in gold; and the teahouse employes the same, or banners with written inscriptions, when it is not to be identified by its location in some fine old residence, or a park, with tile-roofed pagodas, like the famous teahouse in the Chinese city of Shanghai.

The message of this unique tea symbol is to the Mongol passerby; for the Mongol is a milk drinker, and his tea is a decoction more nearly resembling soup, being cooked in an open kettle over a fire, with butter and various other ingredients added. The "tea" itself bears no likeness to the tea leaf of commerce as it is known elsewhere. It is appropriately called "brick tea," being made from tea dust, pressed into a form that gives it the appearance of a slab of dark

brown wood. When the liquid is ready for drinking, it is transferred from the cauldron to a large copper receptacle built on the lines of the German beer stein, except that its perforated top is fixed, instead of hinged. This familiar object, in Mongolia, replaces the teapot used in China.

Attached to the humble dwelling in Peking, where the yellow sign swings, is a cow yard and its inhabitants, and therefore the character for "milk." But more welcome than this, to the Mongol, is the cheese of his native land which he may procure here.

It may be superfluous to mention that the form of the emblem does not suggest that of the Mongol's cheeses, as these are invariably cut into six- or eight-inch squares, of a thickness of about three inches. The cheese is very hard, and white in colour, and not at all unpalatable, though rather flat and unsalted in flavour. Clusters of these squares hang about the walls of the Mongol's *yurt* (tent) and play their own part in the atmosphere of his home—though not so prominent a one as does the future supply, which is simmering in the huge cauldron over the smouldering fire, occupying the centre of the *yurt*'s floor!

Cheese, it may be remarked, is an article of food foreign to the Chinese regimen; and as the language does not include an authentic term for the commodity, it is called "cheese" by the foreigner's compradore and servants—or rather, "cheesi" or "cheeso," from their inability to cope with the final consonant. True, the Chinese Moslem is a cheese-eater, and among such as these it is known as "milk cake" (*nai bing*). But while it has been conservatively estimated that one in every 40 Chinese is a Mohammedan, it is interesting to remember, also, that in the Moslem province of Kansu, where 3,000,000 of the 10,000,000 inhabitants are followers of the Prophet, a large percentage of the so-called "Moslem Chinese" are not native converts to Islam, but the lineal descendants of the Arab-Persian Moslems, the Tung-siang Moslems, of Ugrian stock, and the Salar Moslems, whose forefathers were expelled from Samarkand by their ruler, one of the descendants of Mohammed.

The ancestors of the Arab-Persian Moslems first entered China during the Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618–936) coming through Central Asia by way of Chinese Turkestan. The arrival of the Tung-siang, believed to be of the same race as the Hsiung-Nu Turks,<sup>13</sup> is placed

somewhere in the seventh or eighth centuries; while the Salar Moslems, following the injunction of their revered prophet-ruler, set forth in search of a new country—which he described to them by the colour of the land and water, and by the fact that a white camel had there been changed into stone—and reached China some time in the Ming dynasty (1368–1644). “By reason of this pure-stock addition to their numbers, the Mohammedans of Kansu are more easily distinguished from ordinary Chinese than Moslems living in other parts of China.” Thus, of the 3,000,000 “Moslem Chinese” in Kansu province, 350,000 are sprung from alien stock. The 50,000 aborigines (Miaos) are for the most part Lamaist Buddhists, like the Mongolian and Tibetan immigrants. In the Chinese flag the Mohammedans are represented in the white stripe; the Tibetans in the black; the Mongolians in the blue; the Manchus in the red; and the Chinese in the yellow.





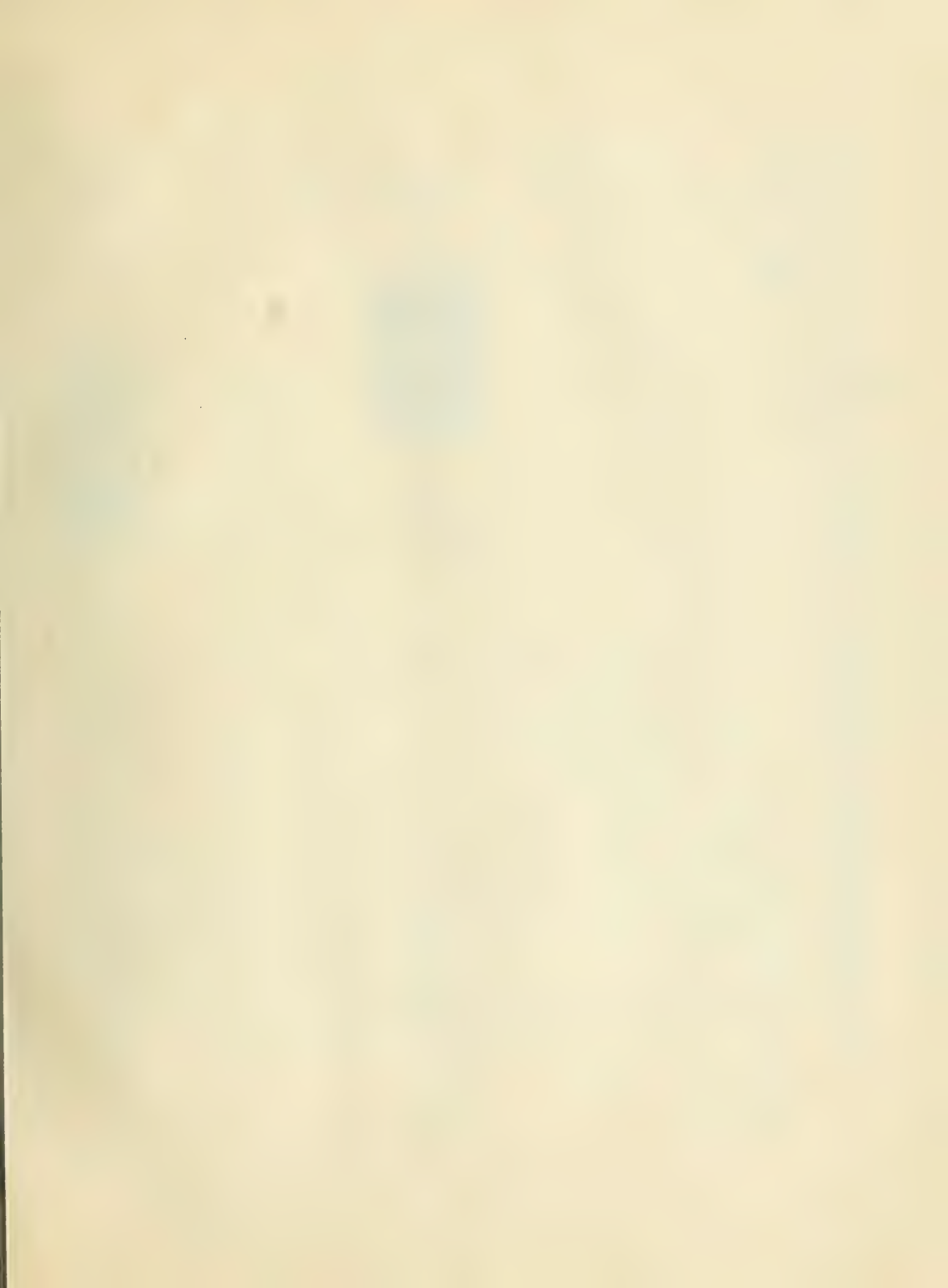
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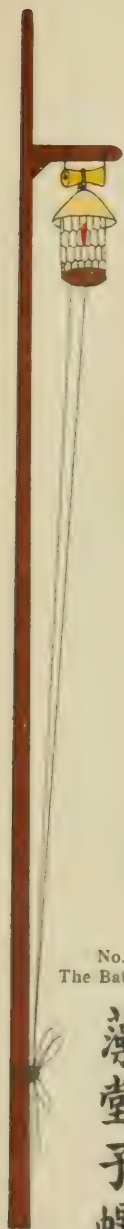
THE OUTER MAN

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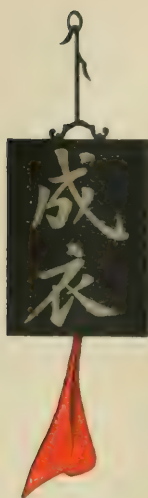






No. 23.  
The Bath-House.

澡堂子幌子



No. 24.  
The Tailor.

裁縫鋪幌子



No. 25.  
The Barber.

剃頭鋪幌子



## Chapter Four:

### *The Bath, the Barber and the Tailor.*



BVIOUSLY enough, the assumption of the pleasant task of providing a sort of animated index to the quaint subject of Peking's shop emblems, involved the selection of the most suitable means of introducing them to the reader, and of enlisting his interest in the folk to whom they are a commonplace. A careful preliminary survey of the field covered by our collection of symbols had disclosed it to be both broad and diverse; and

the idea suggested itself of arbitrarily mapping it off into sections, whose boundaries the reader readily would understand to be imaginary, and indicated solely for the purpose of eliminating any avoidable confusion of mind. With this end in view, the aspect that appeared most likely to engage sympathetic attention at the outset, is the one that has just been presented.

It must be confessed, however, that, in thus deciding, considerable reliance has been placed on that human impulse which instinctively recognizes the legitimacy of the inner urge, and for the time being,

at least, establishes the universal brotherhood of man among the thinkable possibilities of the future.

Should then, the fortuitous fact be, that these calculations have not altogether miscarried, it gives rise to the hope that the suggestions indicated in the new chapter heading, of a visit to the bathhouse and the barber's, will equally commend themselves as a not inappropriate preliminary to the approaching tour of the field in which the Chinese in search of exterior furnishings will be found moving from point to point. Perhaps during our progress from one shop to another, the reader will imagine himself passing by many a symbol which will now be comprehensible.

### THE PUBLIC BATH.

Before proceeding, however, beyond the doorway of the bathhouse, where a diminutive lantern sheds a faint light as it swings from the short arm of a tall and slender pole, it would be as well to point out, in the interests of truth, that such signs as No. 23—one of the few devices common to all parts of China—are far more numerous than is perhaps imagined by those who, without having visited the country, may nevertheless have formed impressions from the hasty judgment of hurried travellers who have estimated the amount of care which the Chinese bestow upon the person, by that which is manifestly not expended upon the streets, nor upon those questions of sanitation, by which the West determines the standards of civilization.

The facts of the matter, however, are made rather easily discernible by the popularity of public bathing in China; and by all these indications the bath would seem to play fully as large, if not a greater part in the scheme of things Chinese, as is the case, broadly speaking, among many of the nations of the West. As an institution, the public bath of China is not to be accounted for on the ground tentatively suggested as one of the *raisons d'être*s of the public feeding places of the country, viz., inadequate facilities in the homes of the poor, as this would relegate its functions as applying to but one class of the Chinese people, which would be far from the truth. For the status of the public bath is in no wise affected by the inclusion of a "wash-room," with shallow, portable tub, round or oval, in the

equipment of the middle-class homes, and in those of the wealthy, of relatively better facilities.

It is to be assumed, however, though the suggestion is never made directly, that, since there are no public baths for women these provisions are largely monopolized by the women and children of the family. (The mere intimation of such an operation being performed by a woman, anywhere but in private, would be received with pained and reproachful consternation). They undoubtedly serve their purpose abundantly well, however little they may conform to the Westerner's ideas of adequacy, the point involved being mainly that of the latter's highly sensitized instinct for "creature comforts."

This attitude the true Chinese regards, of course, as a mere example of over-emphasis; while the latter's unheated house, with its formal arrangement of hard, marble-topped divans, and stiff-backed chairs set along the walls, produces on the foreigner, the impression which is among those that lend support to the oft-quoted conclusions of the foreign analyst of Chinese psychology, who has declared that, as a race, the Chinese are indifferent to physical comfort. The difference in viewpoints is undebatable, being obviously based on a divergence in racial philosophy; but that the forces of change are at work on this rock-bottom foundation of an ancient civilization is evidenced in the presence of the English easy chair among the furnishings of the modern Chinese home.

However, be this as it may, it is indubitably a fact that, on many points, East and West continue to meet as little as may be, in their respective conceptions of that which bespeaks bodily ease, in spite, one may say, of a marked diminution in the amused wonder with which the old school of Chinese was used to regard many of the Westerner's notions—notably those governing the question of recreation—until his own sons and daughters began to respond to their influence. The instances are also numerous, however, of the failure of the foreigner to grasp the fundamentals in this difference of viewpoint, and many are the humorous incidents arising from gratuitous efforts at interference therewith—efforts, be it said, usually better intentioned than advised, as is shown in the following anecdote which comes somewhat aptly to mind, at the moment:

The story is that of a humanely-disposed old lady, travelling for the first time in the interior of China. Keenly distressed as the

stranger invariably is, at the evidences everywhere patent of an appalling poverty, her sympathies were particularly aroused on observing groups of idly chatting villagers, squatting on the ground in the characteristic "off-duty" attitude of the Chinese. The position is the familiar one, in which the arms rest on bent knees, with the weight of the body sustained by the heels.

Everywhere along the route of the kindly traveller, these rows of idlers met her troubled gaze; and at last, in self defence, as it were, she gave orders, and provided funds for the construction of benches on the railway platforms, at least. And explaining to the astonished recipients of her bounty that she would shortly be returning by the same route, she went on her way. In due course, the Good Samaritan, retracing the steps of her journey to the point from which it had begun, prepared herself for the inward gratification which would be hers on witnessing the joy resulting from her act of Christian thoughtfulness.

What, then, were her feelings, on alighting at the first of the little stations along the way, at finding the benches duly set in place, it is true, and very much in use, though not quite in the way intended. Her protégés, in short, were resting and gossiping on the benches now, and not upon the ground; but, instead of being seated, they were squatting, as before, and employing the benches for the purpose, as though in duty bound!

Thus, alas! does the unseasoned traveller beset his own path with pitfalls more amusing to the spectator than to himself, when he attempts to make his way through China, either with condescension, or with preconceived notions that are constantly and surreptitiously clamouring to justify themselves. The veteran, of course, makes neither of these mistakes, and therefore, with the success of our expedition in view, it would seem to be wiser to adopt an open-minded attitude in observing the conditions under which the ceremony of the bath takes place in China—the degree of its frequency being governed largely by the character of the individual and the nature of his occupation, whether he be countryman, villager, or denizen of any of the large cities.

#### THE INTERIOR OF THE BATH.

The first impression which the interior arrangement of the bath-house produces is that the order of its construction is precisely that



of the swimming pool of the West; whereupon swiftly follows the realization of the grave violation of Western standards of sanitation,—the pool of running water being not yet a feature of the bathhouse in China. In the modern structures with which Peking abounds—which, by the way, would display a signboard with written characters—this will doubtless be a consideration in the future. In the capital, these institutions are almost exclusively conducted by Mohammedan Chinese, and it is interesting to speculate on the relationship thus suggested, between the teachings of the Moslem faith, and the universal demand for public baths, in view of the fact already touched upon, that 55,000,000 of China's 400,000,000, roughly speaking, are followers of the Prophet. In the largest of these institutions a hundred bathers may be accommodated at a time. Yet the system of emptying the pools not oftener than once a day is said to prevail here, as in the smaller and much more primitive baths.

It should be pointed out, at the outset of our remarks, that since we are dealing with the baths displaying such a sign as No. 23, we are constrained to pass over with a mere mention those provided for the wealthy and official classes, in which are found separate rooms, with porcelain tubs, and every equipment for comfort and service. In some of the newest of these structures—notably those of Shanghai—the luxury of appointments is described in superlative terms. The rooms may be hired for a day, or for as long as may be desired, and it is known that many a bit of official business has been consummated in this environment. Our range of vision, however, need not be too strictly limited by that phase of the situation indicated by our bathhouse symbol, for the reason that the modern baths, outside of this particular class, cater to the general public by the provision of a common pool.

In the bathhouses we are discussing, then, the general plan is the same—the square pool of varying depths, with first-, second- and third-class dressing rooms built in around, and with a bordering ledge. The bathers sit upon this, and upon another ledge that runs straight across the centre and divides the pool into two parts, with the water on one side very much hotter than on the other. Fortunately enough, from the standpoint of health considerations, the Chinese demands extremely hot water in his bath, which presupposes a greater amount of fresh supply than the appearance of the water would seem to

indicate. It is worth while mentioning, also, that the greater the contact with foreign teachings, the stronger the native distaste for some of the conditions characteristic of the public bath, with the result that house servants in the port cities, are among its keenest critics; and nothing could exceed their lively satisfaction with the bathing facilities for servants, which are being included in the modern foreign residence.

The bathhouse pool, being common to all in the prevailing democracy for which China is remarkable, class differences manifest themselves in the choice of dressing-rooms, and extra services demanded—the cost of the bath being determined in this wise, and ranging from six coppers to twenty cents.<sup>14</sup> For the minimum charge a man may perform his ablutions personally, if he choose; but few Chinese do so elect. Hence every bathhouse has its army of coolies, who, for a few coppers take over the task of scrubbing, while the bather yields to the warmth and the sensation of luxury, and stretches himself out on the ledge in delicious sleep. The surface of the water is considerably below the feet, as the legs dangle from the ledge; and no bather stands in the water.

The question of the possible conveyance of disease the Chinese disposes of by his faith in the germ-destroying heat of the water, which he relies upon as a curative agent for any ailment of his own. And one even discerns, in the replies to questions on this point, a tendency to believe that water that has been bathed in by others is rather more efficacious than the fresh water. Hence, in the country districts, the early morning hours are not popular among those afflicted with aches and pains.

There is, however, another kind of bathhouse that should also be taken account of, in which there is no pool at all. It is found in the remoter towns and villages, especially in the north, where the water supply, in drougthy seasons, is exceedingly limited. Its plan is the same as that of the other baths, except that the central space here is without a pool, and becomes a general lounge for the bathers, while the rooms running round the square are furnished with portable tubs, circular, or oval, and very shallow. A board is laid across the tub, and on this the bather sits; and after he has been scrubbed, rinsed and rubbed down by the bath coolie, he joins the assembled company

in the large room, takes his ease on one of the couches, and gives himself over to the ministrations of the chiropodist and the barber.

These latter artisans are in great demand in China, and are an invariable adjunct to the staff of any bathhouse; and when the Peking houseboy returns from his sufficiently frequent absences on a thoroughgoing mission of this sort, his general appearance is of the most immaculate, and his shaven head—which is the mark of the Number One in Peking—is as polished as a billiard ball.

### THE BARBER'S SHOP.

Meantime, however, the services of the barber, who maintains a shop under the sign indicated by No. 25, must be depended upon as well, as the Chinese is not naturally a self-shaver. But, catering as he does to a practically beardless race, the barber's functions are rather those of shampooer and ear cleaner—that strange demand, whose evidences are insistent and universal. The major portion of his attention is devoted to the scalp; for while the faces of his patrons require but a negligible amount of shaving, some portion of the scalp invariably does. But while the completely shaven head is more or less *à la mode*, in some parts of the country, the shaving of temples and forehead suffices for the generality of Chinese, while the head that carries a queue must have a shaven patch all around the appendage.

Taking it by and large, the bit of iron, about two inches long by one inch in width, which the Chinese call a razor, is an altogether remarkable implement, doing its work without the aid of lather, and riding successfully over face or scalp, after they have been buried under hot towels for a period of about ten minutes. Its aspect is not such as would tend to inspire confidence in the foreign mind, and yet actual experience with it is said to hold none of the terrors that seemed to promise.

The queue is, of course, still common enough in the country districts, and among the labouring coolie class, generally. And it is they who employ the itinerant barber, who, with his brass basin is usually to be found near the hot-water shop. The while he is busily occupied in shaving the poll, or combing and plaiting the long tresses, his client's team of oxen may be seen philosophically munching its meal of *kan tsao* (chopped straw) close by.

That the most hard-working class of Chinaman should be the one, of all others, to cling fondly to the burden of long hair is precisely one of those characteristic touches that whets the appetite for travel in the interior. The thought calls to mind the amusing lines of the poet Po Chu-I, written about eleven centuries ago (A.D. 832). Poet, scholar and politician—having been, in the latter capacity, Governor of Hangchow, Soochow and the province of Honan, at various stages of his career—Po Chu-I reflected resignedly "On His Baldness"<sup>15</sup> in the following wise:

"At dawn I sighed to see my hairs fall;  
At dusk I sighed to see my hairs fall.  
For I dreaded the time when the last lock should go . . .  
They are all gone and I do not mind at all!  
I have done with that cumbrous washing and getting dry;  
My tiresome comb forever is laid aside.  
Best of all, when the weather is hot and wet,  
To have no top-knot weighing down on one's head!  
I put aside my dusty conical cap;  
And loose my collar-fringe.  
In a silver jar I have stored a cold stream;  
On my bald pate I trickle a ladle-full.  
Like one baptized with the Water of Buddha's Law,  
I sit and receive this cool, cleansing joy.  
Now I know why the priest who seeks Repose  
Frees his heart by first shaving his head."

But returning to the subject of our "modern" barber's sign, we find that its background is an oblong bit of white cloth. This, we are told is intended to inspire the desire for cleanliness. In fact, the two characters inscribed in its centre, seek to remind him who may be able to read them, of the paramount duty of the Superior Man at all times to be mindful of his personal appearance. The designs traced in black appear to have no special meaning, and except for the suggestion of waves in the lower section, seem to be little enough Chinese in character. Nevertheless, the sign is easily identified by its patrons, even without the characters.



## THE TAILOR'S SHOP.

Sign No. 24, adjoining the bathhouse emblem, is that of the tailor—black, with golden characters—calm in the assumption that by those that matter it will be understood, in the same spirit as is shown by the tea merchant, who writes the single character for tea somewhere outside of his shop, and relies on the intuitive faculties as a guide in matters of universal need.

The tailor's sign is much smaller than the usual run of inscribed signboards, and is probably identified at a distance for this reason. But failing this, the perfectly visible shop interior tells its own story. In fact, human occupations are surrounded with little mystery in China, where almost all work and, indeed, nearly every other conceivable act is naively performed in public.

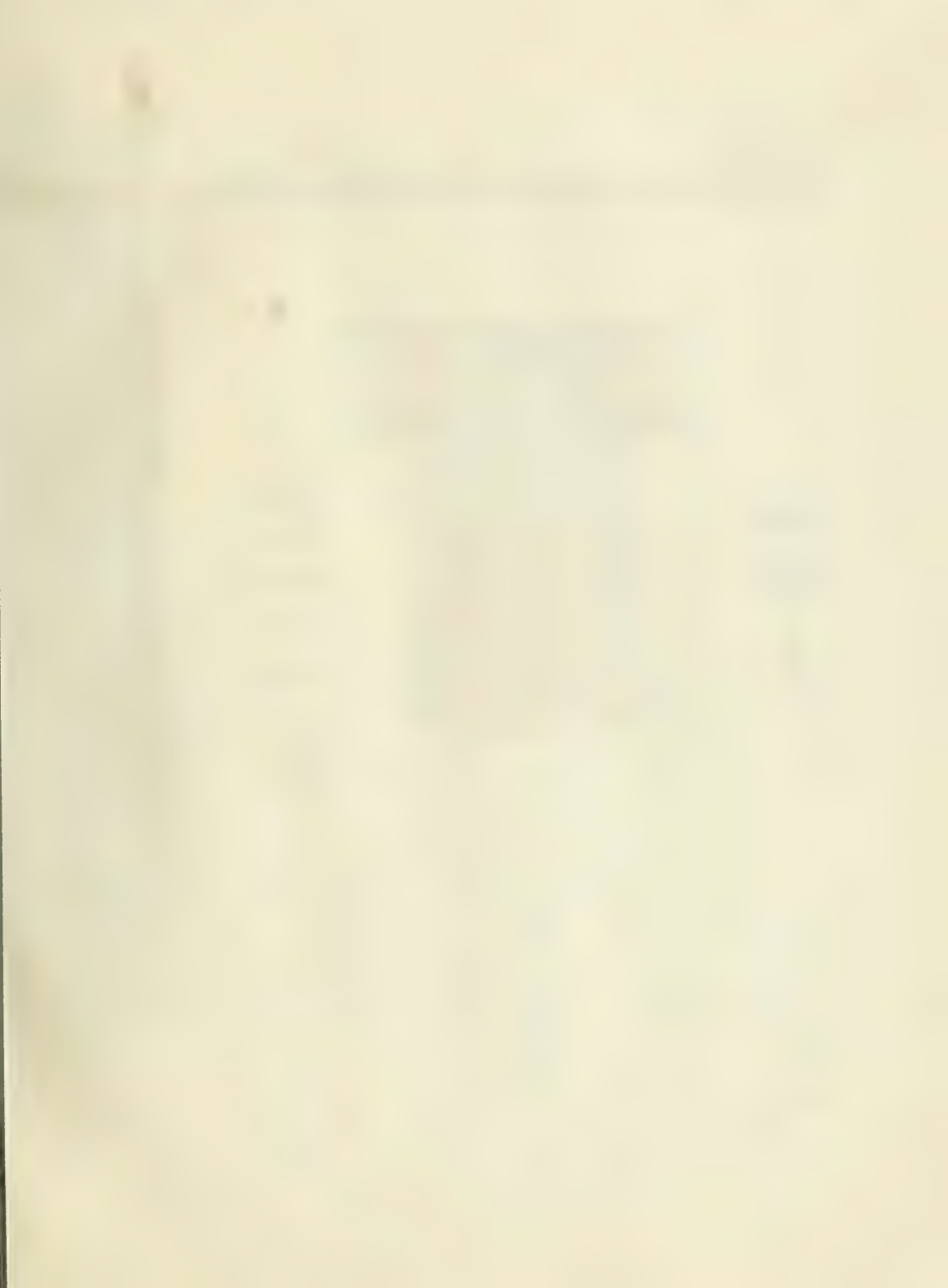
Tailor shop interiors are none too inviting, be it said. Fitted only with long tables and stools, densely packed with busy workers, men and boys of all ages but never women, they are populated as well by the tailor's "babies" and family—not to mention the inevitable group of friends playing at mah-jong, and doubtless yielding him a revenue thereby. They are, however, workrooms, pure and simple, since it is the custom in China to purchase one's own material, send for the tailor, and be fitted in one's own home. (Port city tailors catering to foreigners alone are, of course, understood to be an exception to this rule, which nevertheless, still applies to the ladies' tailor).

The steady increase in the number of foreigners in China apparently has divided the tailoring trade along the line of exclusive dealing either with the native, or the foreigner; the latter section of the craft having developed an extraordinary amount of "side," when one recalls that in the old days the Chinese tailor enjoyed little respect in the community, received a wage lower than that of almost any other craftsman, and was universally believed to be on the watch for ways and means of defrauding his patrons. Indeed in the amount of material submitted, allowance had to be made for the percentage that would be filched, and even this did not always suffice him.

Nevertheless, it is an industry that never flags, owing to the high regard in which dress is held by the Chinese, and the frequency with which changes are made to conform to the weather—these running

the gamut from the sheerest of grass cloth and silk gauzes, to heavily padded silks and satins, heavy broadcloths, and fur-lined garments, long and short, worn one on top of the other, in as many layers as are required by the unheated houses everywhere, and by the intense cold of the climate, in the north.

The Chinese system of cutting out garments is, of course, radically different to the foreign method. Native dress, when not cut out by eye measurement, is subjected to the foot-rule, a rough drawing being made of the outline of the entire garment, as if back, front and sides as well as sleeves, were to be of one piece. Seams are pasted, instead of basted, and sewn with silk. Women's dresses are made by men, and embroidery is done by little boys—Chinese women, as a rule, being singularly inapt as sempstresses, even though great ladies did embroider the shoes for their lily feet. Despite this fact, however, an army of women embroiderers has sprung up under the hands of missionaries, and a multitude of "sew-sew" amahs, under those of the foreign "missy."





No. 26.  
The Hat Shop.

毡帽幌子

No. 27.  
Second-hand Clothes.

估衣鋪幌子

No. 28.  
Shoe Soles.

底子作房幌子



## Chapter Five:

### *Clothing and its Accessories.*

#### SECOND-HAND CLOTHES.



little further along in our series of tours the reader will be conducted over the ground covered by the title "Industries," which might have included the tailor's shop, except that it seemed desirable to present first of all the general method observed by the Chinese, in the acquisition of raiment. This having been done, mention must also be made of the increasing popularity of the ready-made clothing shop, once resorted to only by the unfastidious. To such a shop, signs are superfluous, for a wilderness of garments, hanging from long strips of bamboo inserted into the sleeves, covers the walls and stretches half-way over the pavement outside, quite obliterating the *chiao pai*, but providing in themselves, a sufficient guide to possible clients. From these busy marts arises a tremendous din, created by the chants of the various salesmen, who, with an astonishing gusto that seems never to flag, announce the matchless perfections of their offerings to an impassive world of shoppers.

Sign No. 27, however, automatically identifies itself to the initiated as that of the dealer in second-hand apparel—not by any means, be it said, of the description shown in the picture.

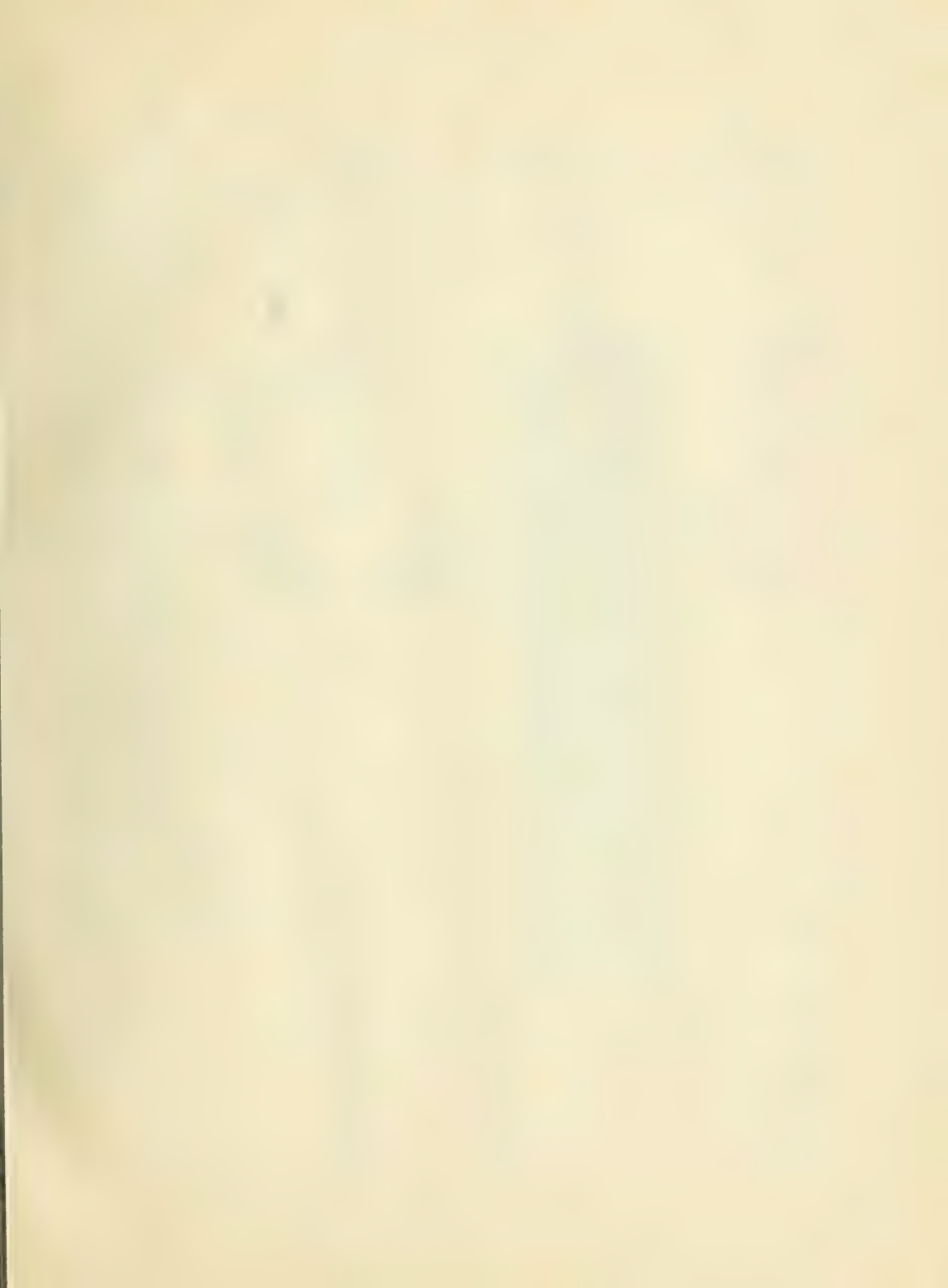
It is quite characteristic of the Peking shopkeeper generally, and of the clothing dealer in particular, to make no concessions whatever in his shop sign, to changes in social customs and their influence on popular fashions. Political upheavals, he probably reflects, have nothing to do with him, provided always, they leave him in possession of his own—which, alas! they have seldom enough done. At all events, whenever such changes have removed outright the demand for such and such articles of dress, or the accessories thereto, he has simply taken down their indices altogether. But when his shop sign announces that he deals in coats, hats, boots and shoes, or whatever may be his stock, of what matter if these symbols of his be somewhat anachronistic? If a man be in search of an outfit of outer habiliments, he may be assumed to know that he will find in the shop not such as the dealer hangs up without, but those of the prevailing mode. And in this the dealer proves himself to be quite in the right.

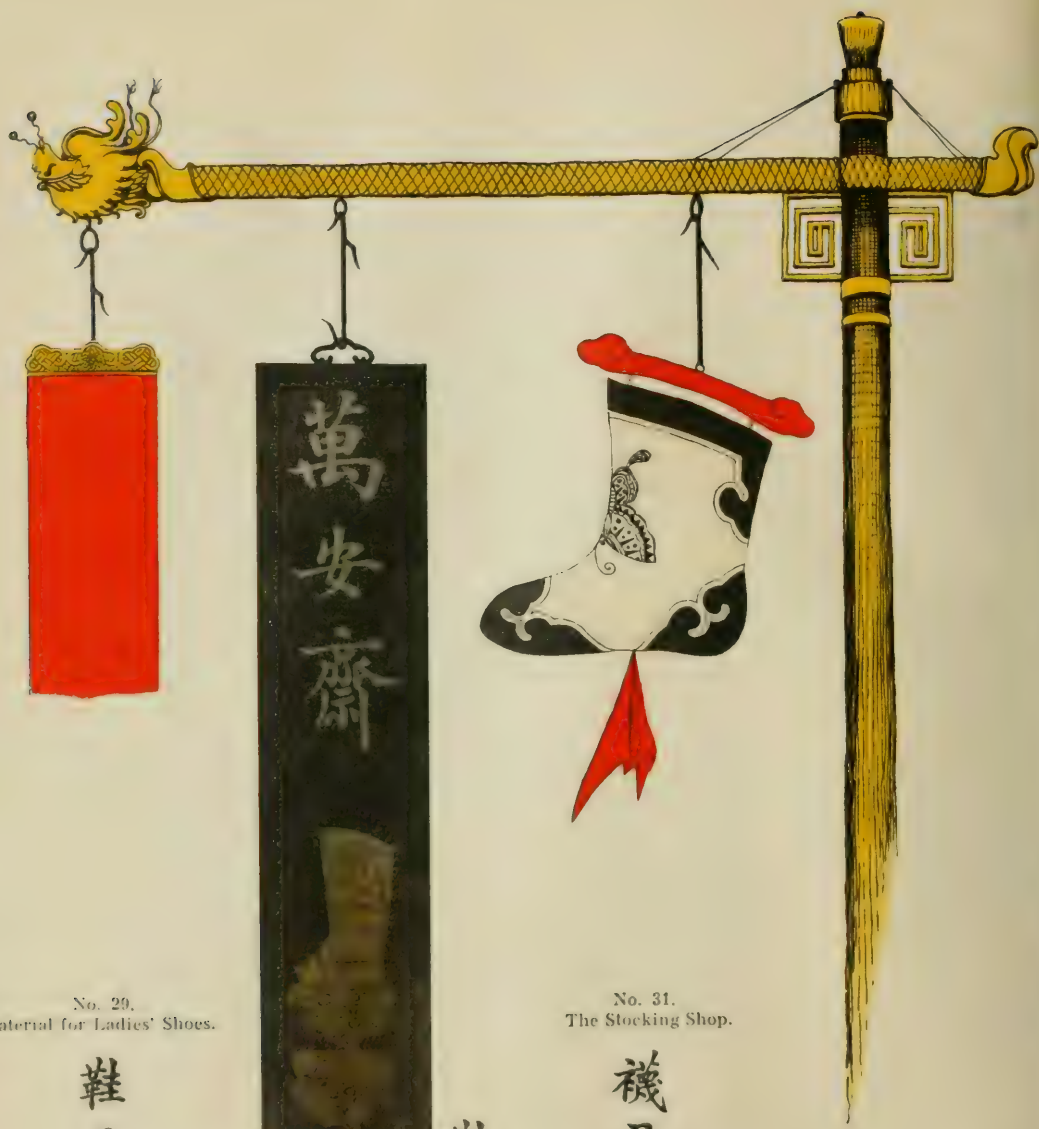
#### THE HAT SHOP.

The man in search of a new head covering, it goes without saying, will not expect to find in the shop such a hat as is shown below the skull cap in Sign No. 26. Who knows better than he that it illustrates a page in history—a phase of life that has passed? Therefore, he enters the shop for the purpose of purchasing the article, which, obviously, is to be found there, *i.e.*, the skull cap. As for the removal of the redundant item, such, from the shopkeepers' point of view, plainly would be an unreasonable act, since this would materially affect the artistic "look-see" of the sign—always an important consideration with the Chinese—and to what purpose, he would quite properly ask? Hence, it remains.

#### SHOE SOLES.

And similarly, in the case of Sign No. 28. Here is the dealer in shoe soles, to which are attached cloth, silk, or felt uppers in the fashioning of that variety of footgear, sometimes referred to as the





No. 29.  
Material for Ladies' Shoes.

鞋面布幌子

No. 30.  
The Shoemaker.

鞋鋪幌子

No. 31.  
The Stocking Shop.

襪子鋪幌子



"bedroom slipper," which has become characteristic of the Chinese, and is worn even on the battlefield. The model shown in the sign is very rarely seen in these republican days, but the fact apparently does not signify sufficiently to the Pekingese public to warrant such an offence against artistic effect as would be the substitution of the current pattern of shoes.

When the soles have outlived their usefulness they are replaced under the ministrations of the travelling shoe-mender, who uses them as an aid to the cutting out of the new pair from the slab of leather, or felt, which forms part of his equipment.

#### MATERIAL FOR LADIES' SHOES.

Footgear is also indicated in the three signs on the opposite page, Nos. 29, 30 and 31. The first, No. 29, consists of an oblong section of red cloth swinging from an ornamental wooden frame painted yellow. It signifies, "Material for Ladies' Shoes." But in the wide colour range covered by prevailing fashions in this item of the Chinese woman's apparel, red is a notable exception, and is seldom seen except on the foot of the bride. Perhaps the suggestion of happiness so sedulously emphasized by the Chinese in connection with the marriage ceremony has influenced the dealer in the selection of this colour.

Figured satins and silks, multi- and plain-coloured velvets and cloth are the materials, and the lines are the same as those for men's shoes, though they are more generally soled, thinly, in leather. It must be understood, of course, that all this refers to Chinese fashions, and does not apply to that growing number of women, who combine the French-heeled foreign shoe, made of leather or satin with native dress, nor to the men who have adopted foreign dress. And outside of these considerations are, also, the lily-footed woman, who wears a pointed shoe of velvet, or cloth, according to her station, or adopts a more modern compromise, made of black leather, which more or less aims at the model which it is beyond her to wear.

#### THE SHOE SHOP.

The large sign, No. 30, is that of the dealer in "all kinds of boots and shoes," except, might have been added, those of the pattern painted

in gold on the placard. As to this point, says the dealer, why trouble to make unnecessary changes? Much simpler, in renovating the sign, from time to time, to regild the old device, since the Peking public knows quite well that it will find in the shop ready-made footwear of the popular pattern. In this article of dress, the made-to-order rule apparently is not applied so much as in the matter of clothing; hence, the ladies' shoe shop, for example, is a very gay spectacle indeed.

#### THE STOCKING SHOP.

No. 31 represents the Chinese "stocking," made of thick white cotton goods, and tailored, as one might express it. It is worn over the knitted sock, and is most familiar to the foreigner as an attractive item in the costume of the "amah." It is, of course, *not* enlivened by an ornamental design in black along the top, and at the heel and toe, nor does it carry a descending butterfly across the front. It is worn very generally by both natural- and bound-footed women in the north, and by both men and women of the country districts everywhere. But these white-encased ankles, with trousers bound down over the "stocking" appear to be losing favour in the south.

#### INSIGNIA OF RANK (EXTINCT).

In Nos. 32 and 33 on the opposite page, and No. 35 on the one following, we have three relics of the Manchu dynasty no longer seen to-day. They are among those that passed from view under the wave of so-called popular feeling, in which monarchy and all its trappings became submerged; and they are inserted here for the interest of the reader who may have a fancy for adding to his mental picture of the street signs of modern Peking, the bewildering effect they must have created during the reign of the old Buddha, not so many years ago.

#### *The General's Mount.*

No. 32 announced that the dealer's stock consisted of the distinguishing insignia carried by the horses of government and military officials. The red brush shown in the picture descended from the



No. 32.  
The General's Mount.

馬  
踢  
胸  
幌  
子

No. 33.  
Hats for the Number One Mandarin.

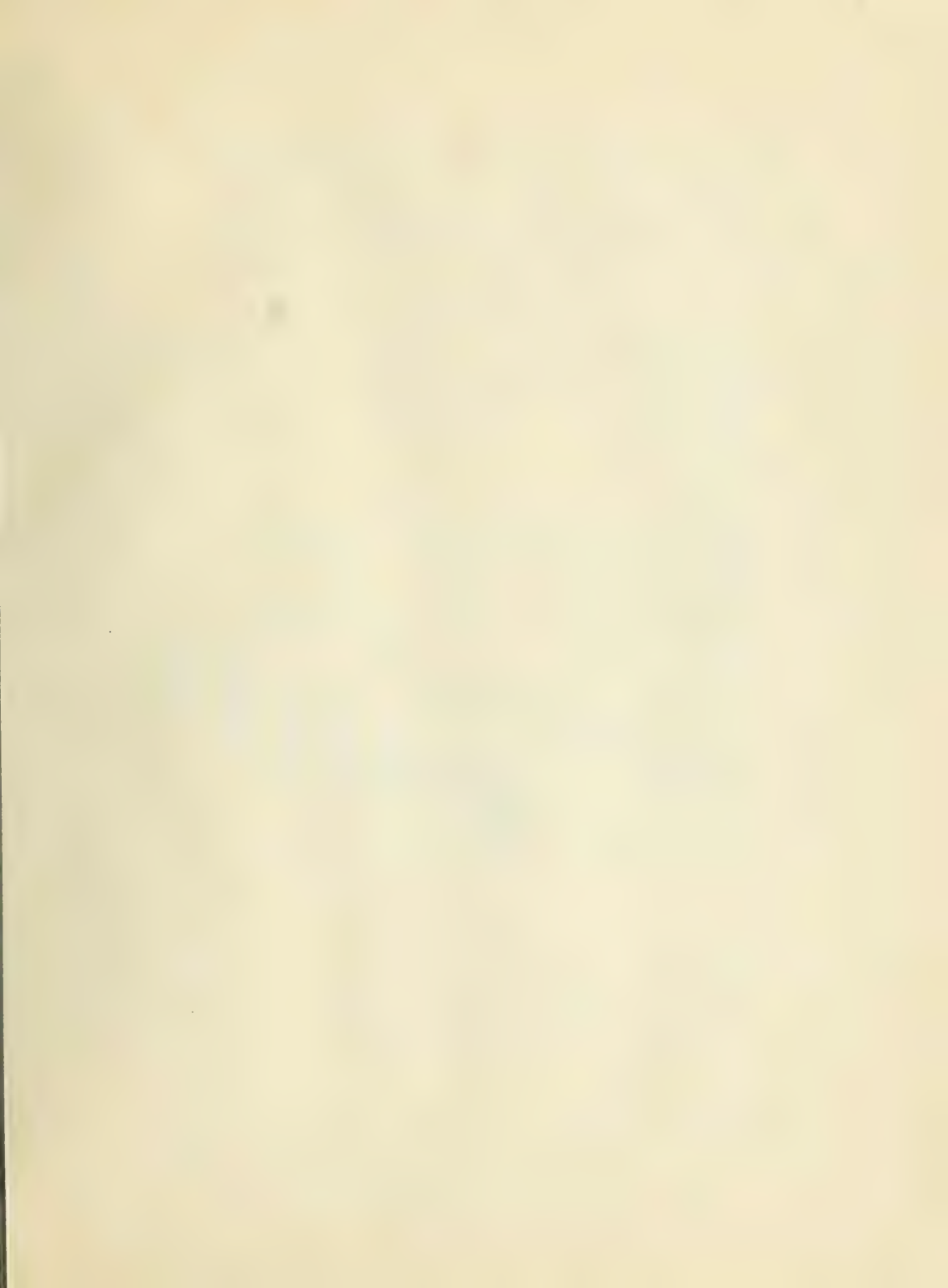
帽  
鋪  
幌  
子

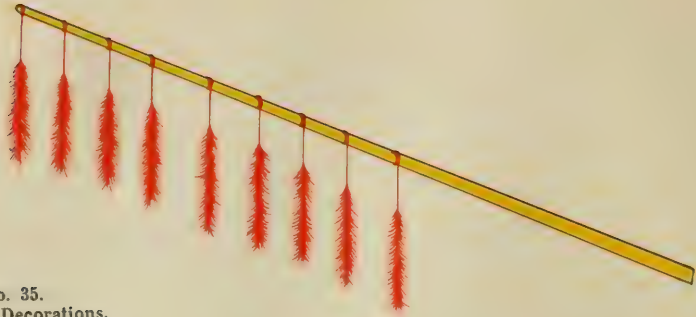
No. 34.  
Kingfisher Feather Ornaments.

翠  
花  
作  
房  
幌  
子









No. 35.  
Officers' Decorations.

品  
級  
翎  
幌  
子



No. 36.  
False Hair.

頭  
髮  
鋪  
幌  
子

neck of the mount of the Ching dynasty general, swinging from the narrow strap that hangs beside it.

### *The Mandarin's Hat.*

The characters written below No. 33 describe it as "The Sign of the Hat Shop," but those inscribed on the placard itself proclaim it to be that of the dealer in hats for the mandarin of the first order. The ornament surmounting its top is that which indicated this rank, both in design and colour, but the inference is that mandarins of whatever order might be fitted out here.

### *Decorations.*

No. 35 was the sign of another dealer in the accessories by which differences in rank were indicated. In this case they consisted of the "decorations" which were made of horsehair, feathers or silk, and so on, among which would be the familiar stiff, brush-like plume that descended from the official's hat at the back. All officers' decorations were made in duplicate sets, the one of silk for ordinary wear, and the other of feathers, for use in wedding or funeral processions.

The peacock feather, sign of the Order of *Baturu* (Manchu word for "brave") which was at one time in the early days of the Ching dynasty, a greatly coveted mark of distinction among the Chinese as well as the Manchus, lost much of its glamour in the course of time, when the decoration was conferred upon mere political candidates who had done nothing to deserve it. Originally, this highest of all honours was to be won only by active, and specially brilliant service on the field of battle; but toward the close of the reign of the Chings, the payment of a very nominal sum was sufficient to ensure the privilege of wearing the peacock feather.

### FALSE HAIR FOR THE QUEUE.

No. 36 stands for the trade in false hair, which received a great impetus under the Manchu mandate commanding the wearing of the queue. To this shop repaired those whose deficient locks required supplementing for this appendage; while previously, it had been

chiefly women who were its patrons, as they have since been, almost exclusively.

#### KINGFISHER FEATHER JEWELRY.

If the reader will turn again to the illustrations facing page 70, he will find, in No. 34, the sign of the dealer in those peculiarly Chinese ornaments, familiar all over the world to-day, in which the natural feathers of the kingfisher are mounted on silver, in the form of headbands, brooches, and necklaces. Perishable they undoubtedly are, yet highly prized for the beautiful blue of their colouring, and the ingenuity and originality of their workmanship.

#### THE SILVER SHOP.

Passing, now, beyond the signs for officers' decorations and for false hair, we come to No. 37, which, being typical of a certain grade of shop, will instantly recall to the reader who has visited Peking, the characteristic scenes of Silver Street, Silk Street and others included in the tourist's experiences of the capital.

In this case, the characters alone serve to identify it as the sign of the Silver Shop, where, it is announced, all kinds of silver, gold and enamel articles, whether for personal adornment, table use, or purely for ornamental and decorative purposes, are to be found ready made; and where, besides, any other desired object may be made to order. These shops, whose front windows, either side of the entrance, gleam with a multitude of silver articles, are a familiar sight in all the cities of China, north, south and west, though this particular arrangement of the signboard is perhaps more peculiar to Peking—those of Shanghai being more generally affixed to the façade of the shop.

Outnumbering all the other objects in this display will invariably be observed the silver presentation flower vase, of unvarying design, with frosted surface and a device of prunus blossoms, signifying happiness and good wishes. It would be interesting to ascertain the number of tons of these pleasant remembrances produced for formal exchange between friends during the China New Year season, especially, in view of the fact, that the Chinese does not confine the





No. 37.  
The Silver Shop.

首飾樓幌子



No. 38.  
Cheap Jewelry.

假首飾幌子



No. 39.  
Scented Oil.

香油鋪幌子



observance of this custom to acquaintances of his own race, but most liberally includes business "friends" from the West. As a result of this agreeable custom, remarkable displays of this variety of silver articles are an established feature of foreign homes during the Christmas season.

Other objects, which the Chinese are fond of reproducing in silver are found among the flower vases and articles of tableware. There one sees the "Laughing Buddha" and other divinities, the many-storied pagodas, and tiny human figures representing the humblest phase of life—the ricksha coolie and his chariot, the cook with his travelling kitchen, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

#### CHEAP JEWELRY.

With something of this spirit of striking contrast, we have placed beside the sign of the resplendent Silver Shop, No. 38, the haven of those in search of the bits of jewelry which the hair, the throat, the ear-lobe, and the finger of the Chinese woman must exhibit at some time or other. The simple ring, painted to imitate silver, proclaims the tradesman's modest mission, eloquently enough, as being the purveyance of imitation finery.

#### SCENTED HAIR OIL.

At No. 39 is dispensed the scented oil with which ebon tresses are made to outshine the raven's wing, and to yield willingly to the deft fingers that weave them into a double knot at the nape of the neck. Sometimes a circle, or again a semi-circle of jasmine flowers is seen to follow the line of the knot. At other times, a bright-coloured flower carefully placed at the right, just back of the ear, adds its own touch to this most becoming coiffure, so admirably suited to the oval face, and the almond-shaped eyes, whose gleam the polished hair seeks, but fails ignominiously, to match.

#### COIFFURE FRAMES.

For the coiffure of the Manchu woman, all sorts of horse hair frames are used as a foundation for the butterfly effects similar to

those worn by the Japanese woman. The Manchu woman, however, parts the hair in front, and wears a knot on top of the head, where it is surmounted by a broad and stiff band of black silk, set upright across the front, with the ends folded in, bow-fashion, and with bright flowers nestling against the hair at one side. The underpinnings comprise Sign No. 40.

It is interesting to reflect that, however much the changes wrought by the Manchu accession to the throne of China tended to render the male Chinese indistinguishable from the Manchu, the personal appearance of the Chinese woman remained the same as ever it had been. With her hair brushed straight back, and coiled at the nape of the neck, her natty short jacket and trousers, covered or not with a skirt, according to her station, she was instantly to be differentiated from the Manchu woman, in her long, straight robe, towering head-piece and unbound feet. With particular zeal, too, the Chinese woman enwrapped her new-born babe in a Ming costume; and the dead were similarly robed, unless an official position demanded otherwise.

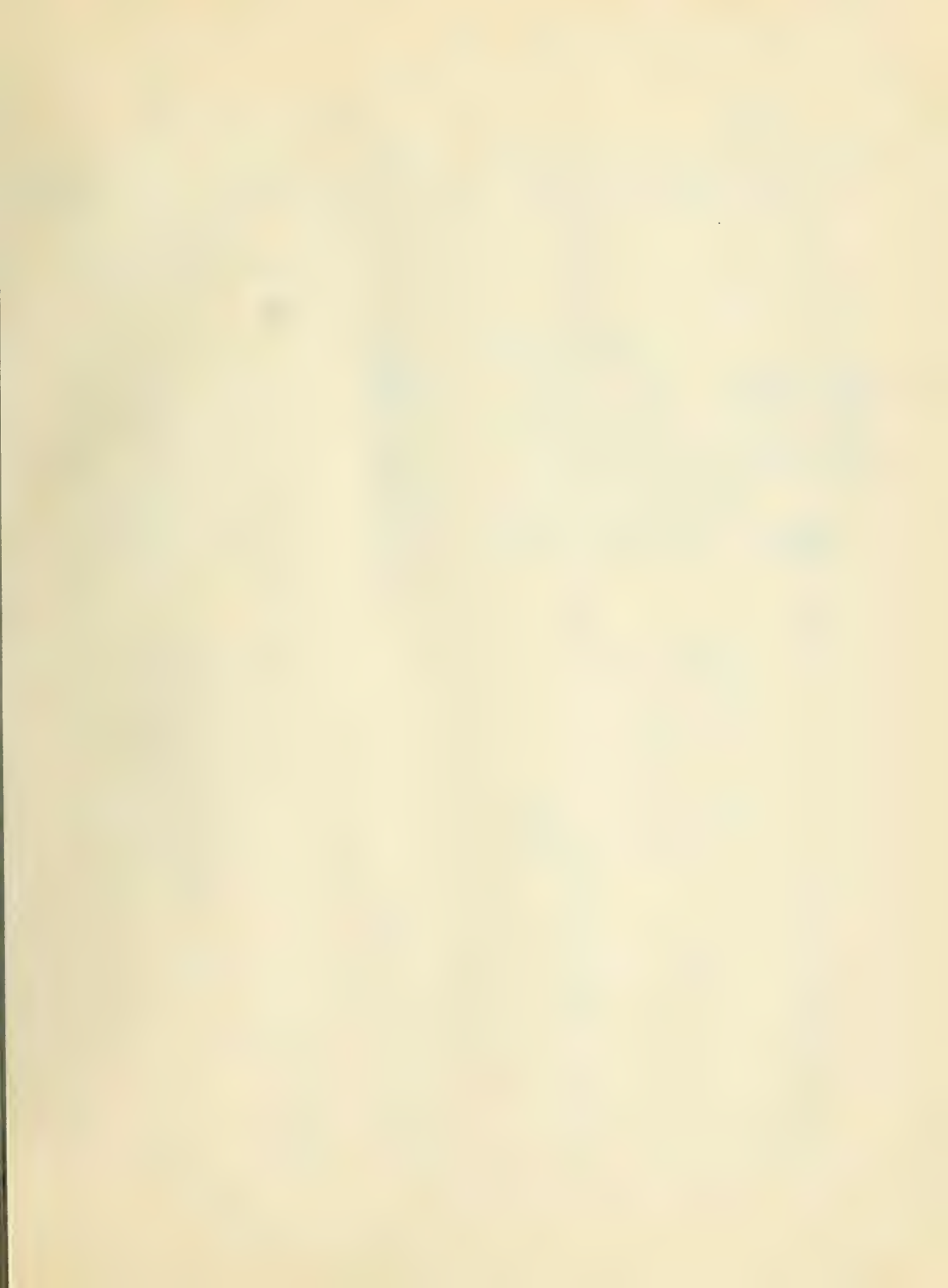
On the other hand, while the status of the Manchu woman in her own country enjoined none of the seclusion imposed upon the Chinese, her freedom became more circumscribed in China by a mandate issued by the first Manchu Emperor, Chun Chih. Among the Manchus, it will be remembered, a daughter takes precedence over her mother, and, in the disposition of property the consent of the eldest daughter must be secured by the father. But, most striking contrast of all, the Manchus erected triumphal arches in honour of women who remained unmarried; whereas, in Chinese belief, the unmarried girl, upon death, becomes one of the evil spirits who threaten the fate of the newborn baby during the first "Hundred Days."

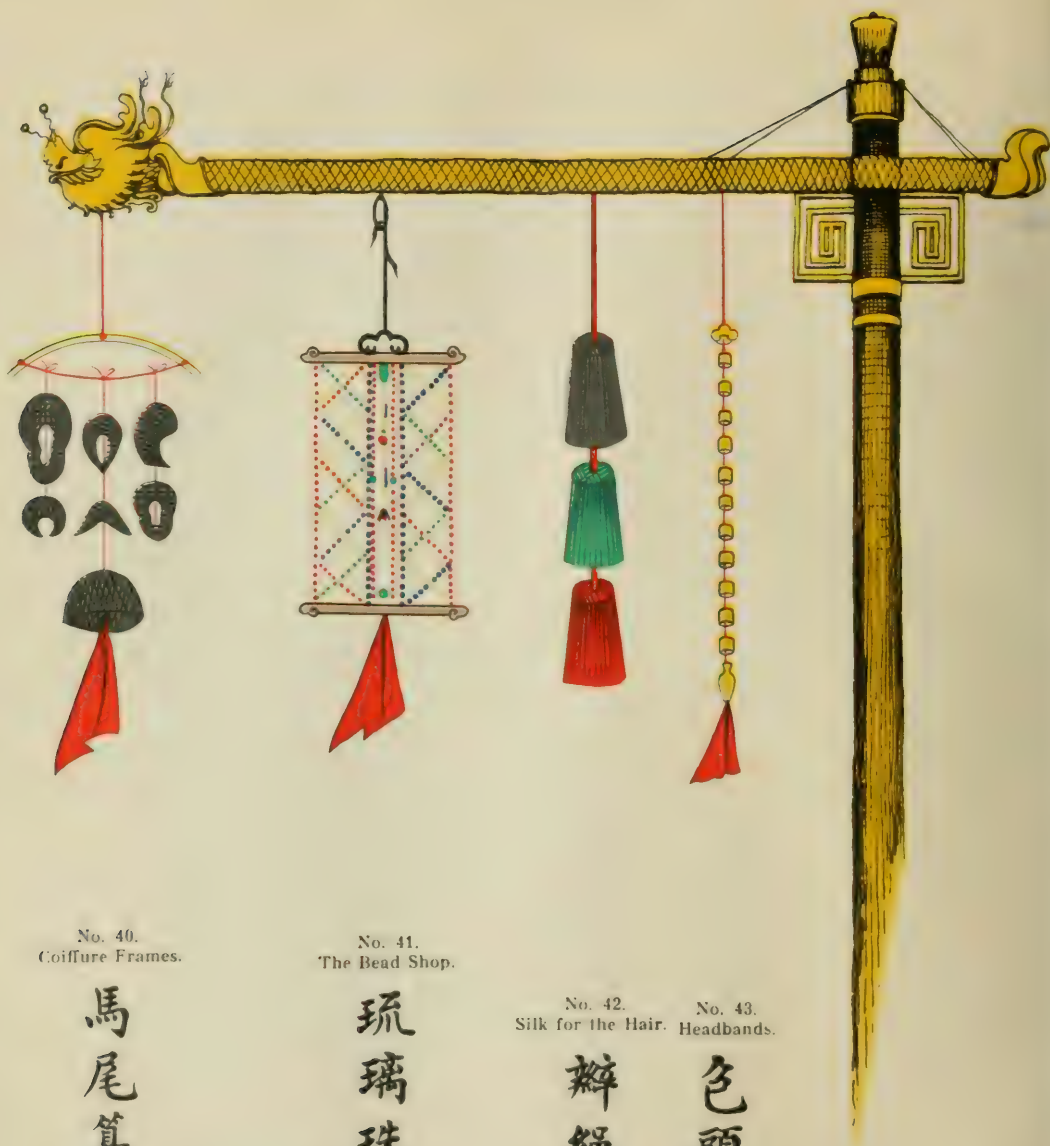
"They are considered as not really belonging to the human race and cannot be reborn as men, in the world beyond the grave. It is for this reason that they wander here below, in quest of the soul of a male child, which they fain would ravish, in order that through this means they may be reborn as men in the womb of a mother."<sup>10</sup>

#### SILK FOR THE PLAIT.

At the shop where No. 42 is displayed, the unmarried girl—or, more properly speaking, the girl under twenty—whose long tresses are







No. 40.  
Coiffure Frames.

馬尾纂鋪幌子

No. 41.  
The Bead Shop.

琉璃珠子幌子

No. 42. No. 43.  
Silk for the Hair. Headbands.

辮繩兜幌子

色頭鋪幌子

worn in a glistening plait down her back, purchases the gaily-coloured silk thread which is wound round and round the plait at the top, to a breadth of about four inches, and adds a distinct note in her personal appearance. Formerly, the plait was abandoned on marriage; but in this transition period, when flesh, fish, and fowl are equally indistinguishable, the only mark that identifies the young unmarried girl from the married, is the short lock of hair worn by the former, just in front of the ear. Otherwise fashions in hair dressing are determined by age, the plait being taboo after the age of twenty, and the plucking of the hairs above the forehead being required of the woman after she has passed the age of thirty. The latter operation, performed with the aid of a piece of white cotton thread, is a familiar sight on the streets, at the doorway of the woman's home. It should be noted, also, however, that since the dawn of "this freedom" on the feminine horizon of China, the "new woman"—that is to say, the girl college student—shows a decided predilection for the universal "bob."

#### HEADBANDS.

In No. 43 we have thirteen bits of bamboo, strung one above the other, with one shaped like a flower-vase at the bottom, and topped by one that is cut with a view to finishing off the design. Would anyone, but a Chinese, be able to guess that this sign represents a stiff headband, made of cloth or velvet, cut to the width of an inch or so over the middle of the forehead, and flanging out and backward as it descends over the ears, to be tied at the back of the head under the knot of hair? The claim is that it is worn for warmth, but as it is most often seen on the heads of elderly women it is resorted to, more probably to cover the baldness resulting from the drawing back of the hair to the required tautness imposed by the Chinese coiffure.

#### THE BEAD SHOP.

Though somewhat out of rotation No. 41 is mentioned last. It is the sign of the bead shop, in the concept of which it is impossible, to-day, to prevent the persistent intrusion of the foreigner, who thus attests the fact that the market for the mandarin chain, which is sus-

pended in the center of the sign, has been removed from China to the West. For thither it travels in its original form, or broken up into many, for the pleasure of milady of London, Paris, New York, or San Francisco—and elsewhere.

In the old days, however, the neck chain of the official was long or short, according to his rank; and in it not only he, himself, but his ancestors and descendants were represented in the pendants at the ends of the silken cords descending therefrom. Down the middle of his back hung the tribute to his forbears, on his left breast, the single one to his eldest son; and on the other side two, one to his wife and one to himself. When he stood, in reverent attitude, before his Emperor, after the kow-tow repeated as often as his station demanded, his body was bent forward until the chain touched the ground. And in this position he stood, for the duration of the audience. Now the significance of this vital point is lost, and the length of a chain of beads is a matter of no more serious moment than the satisfaction of the changing whims of fashion—which take no account, whatever, of dead and gone rulers of the Celestial Empire.

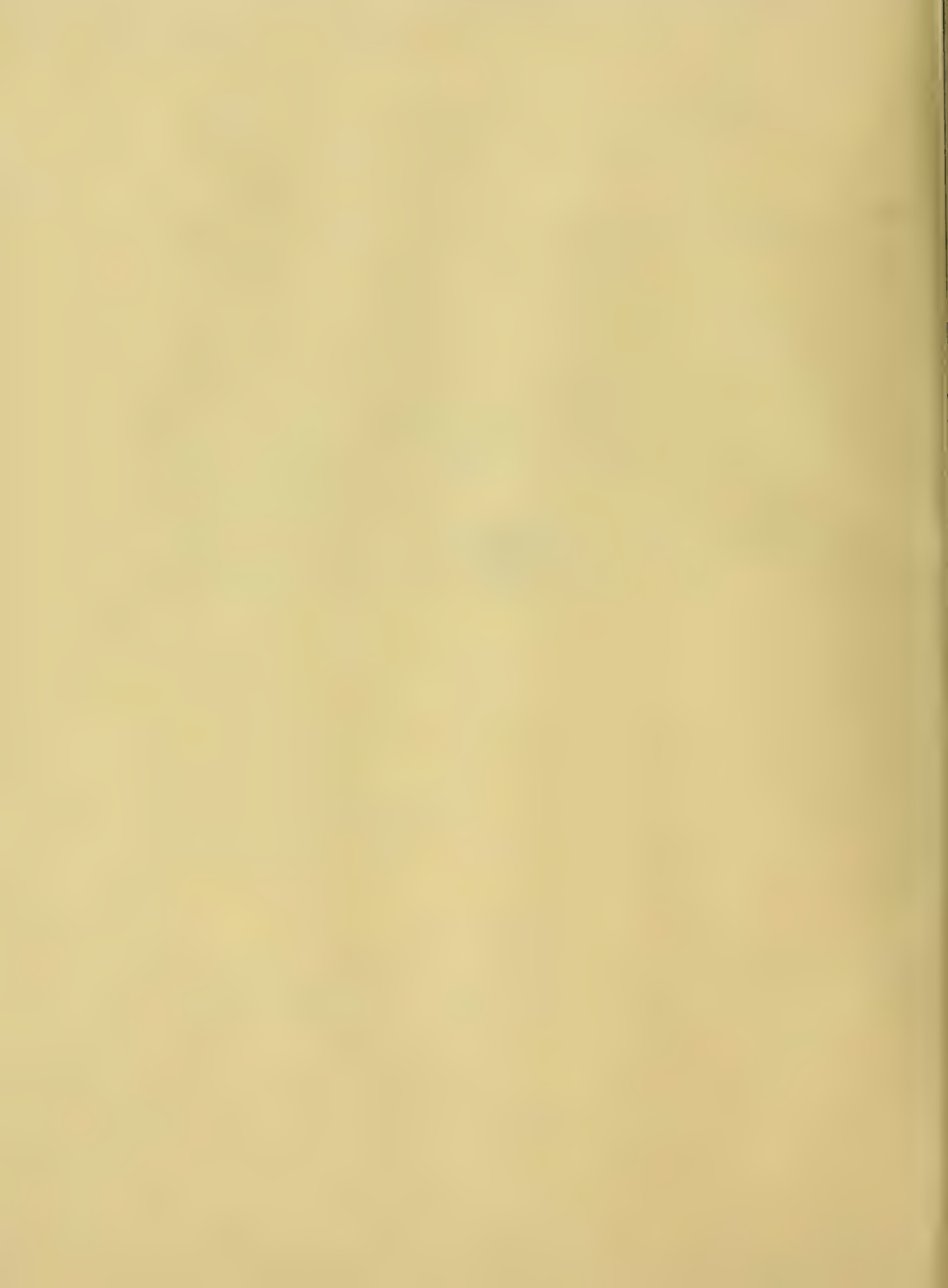


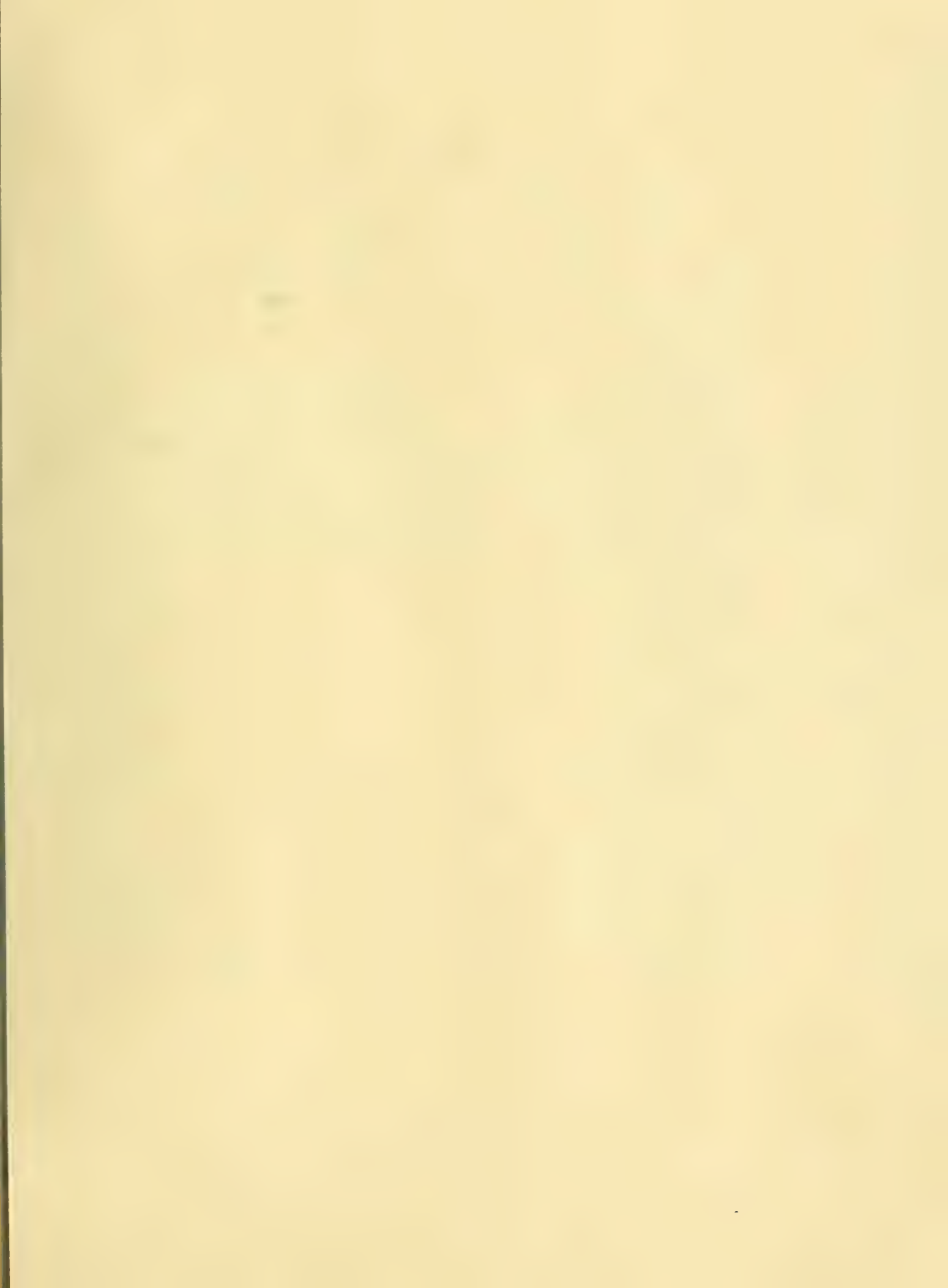
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HIS OCCUPATION

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THE FAUNA AND FLORA OF CHINA ASSEMBLED FOR THE FEAST OF LANTERNS.

The cicada and the crab, the snail and the sacred carp, with huge globular eyes of red glass, are easily made out in the foreground. Their mighty overlord, the dragon, whom it requires from three to five boys to bear aloft through the streets, is greater in length than a half dozen of these shops. The costume of the shopkeeper alone suggests that the season is the dead of winter.



## Chapter Six:

### *Workshop Signs.*



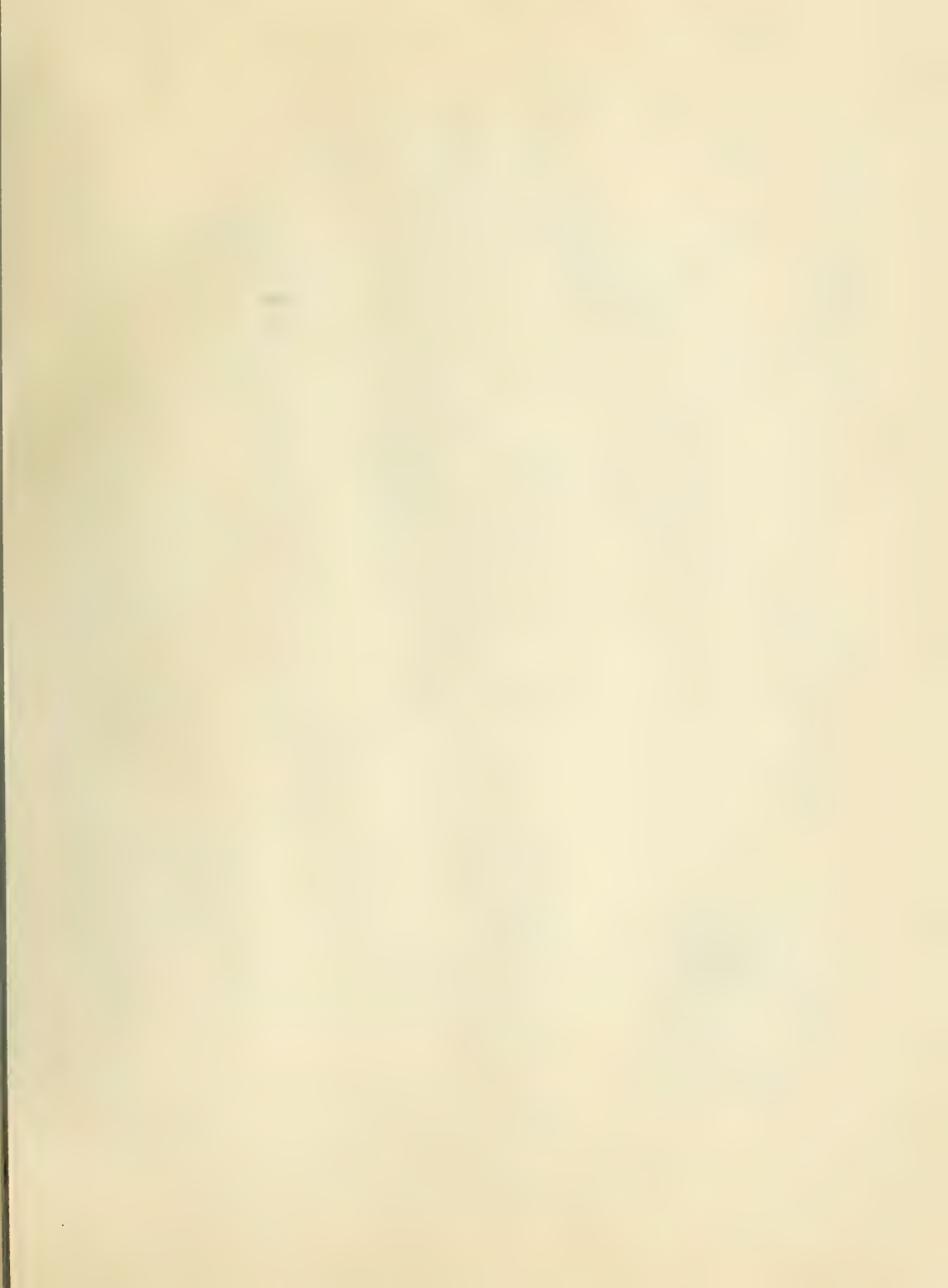
**I**T was once remarked by a foreign traveller in China, whose observation tour conducted over the length and breadth of the country, that, from the industrial point of view, the ex-Celestial Empire appeared to him to be best described as a land in which it took three men to drill one small hole. The comment adroitly expresses the sensation of a sudden leap backward into the Middle Ages that assails the mind attuned to the scale of a machine-made civilization, when confronted with the primitive methods and implements used by the Chinese workman. The statement, and its inferences, might, or might not, be resented by that number of modern industrial magnates—of whom there are some good examples in Shanghai—who are conducting enterprises in which most of the approved Western standards governing hours and conditions of labor, profit-sharing, insurance and pensions, free medical attention, and recreation provisions, are in full swing.<sup>17</sup> The subject is, admittedly, not an easy one to treat of,

even with greater space facilities than present boundaries permit. But one outstanding fact that may be pointed out, in all fairness, is, that these so-called modern features of great industries in China may be said to be merely a twentieth-century expression of the time-old benevolent system that included bonuses and similar provisions in the *noblesse oblige* attitude assumed by the heads of business institutions. The provision of food to their employees—which adds such a quaint note of interest to shopping expeditions in China, when the shopper happens to find himself in a big department store as the gong is being sounded—is often cited as an instance of this regard on the part of the employer. It was, in fact, such an atmosphere of protectiveness that was dimly suggested in our reference to the guilds, in which both sides of this phase of the human equation were shown to be represented.

On the other hand, the comment quoted above has the merit of presenting a broad perspective of general conditions prevailing outside of the mercantile world—and this is another of the conspicuous facts in the immensity and complexity of that which is China. It is, indeed, when one's memory becomes suddenly charged with a multitude of the characteristic scenes being enacted every day on the streets of Chinese villages and cities, including Peking, that one realizes the limitations imposed by our subject.

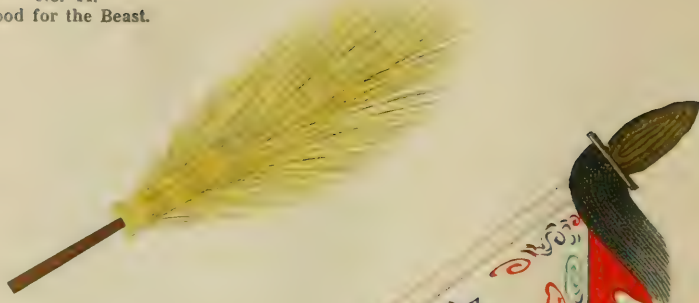
Therefore, before setting out on the tour of inspection arbitrarily laid down by the illustrations comprised in the present section, we would remind the reader only imperfectly acquainted with China, that a whole hard-working world exists, beyond that indicated only in part by our symbols, where that class of toil characterized by our quotation is proceeding merrily, interminably, exactly as it has done for ages past. Fascinating to watch, and fraught with mystery to the disturbed focus of the alien eye, to which all this industry appears vastly inconsequent, such pictures as are enacted in workshops of this class, are neither given, nor do they require captions, since they are perfectly intelligible to the initiated. For this reason, they do not come within our scope. Then, again, beyond all of this, is the army of travelling artisans, which subject was lightly touched upon in an earlier chapter.

We are enabled, however, in our tour of the workshops of Peking, at length to take note of the fourfooted instruments of toil, without



草料鋪幌子

No. 44.  
Food for the Beast.

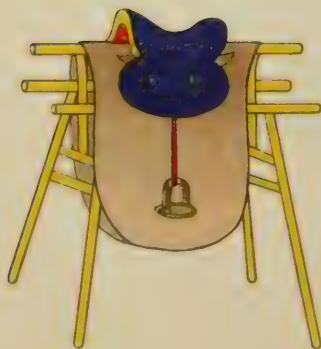


官車鋪幌子

No. 46.  
Government "Peking Carts."



No. 45.  
The Saddlemaker.



鞍鞆鋪幌子

No. 47.  
Crops and Whips.



皮鞭子鋪幌子

whom the labourer's task would be as much hampered as one's own progress through China would be rendered impossible. Hence it may not be amiss if the opening note of our campaign of inquiry be composed of the voices of the ubiquitous donkey, the sleek-coated mule—which in China attains to real distinction and size—the ever-present and much-discussed China pony, the imperturbable ox, and the familiar, and better advertised "Ship of the Desert."

Aggressively aloof is His Majesty the Dromedary, with the haughty and disdainful carriage of his head unrelaxed, whether he be lying on the ground across a shop entrance, taking on or discharging cargo, or moving in a single file of his brethren across a lonely landscape in the outermost reaches of the country. But he enters dominantly into any picture of North China, nevertheless; and the reader may fit him in at any point of the tour of Peking, calling to mind the plaintive note of the little bell round his neck, that is so out of keeping with the impressive dignity of the movements which give it tongue, that one's sense of balance is considerably restored by the weird, hysterical screams wherewith, periodically, he rends the air.

#### THE INNER AND OUTER URGE.

##### *Food for the Beasts.*

In Sign No. 44 appears the device displayed by the shop where the camel, along with the other and humbler members of this brotherhood of workers, would be fed.

##### *Whips and Crops.*

Of the assortment of crops composing Sign No. 47, the one at the extreme right would be plied by the camel's driver; while next but one, and closely resembling it, is the stimulant administered by the ox-cart driver. Next to this, on the left (fourth from the right) is the whip used on the horse, or mule, in harness.

The second from the left is the equestrian's crop, only to be used, however, when he is mounted on ponyback. These long tails, ornamented with tufts of colour, signify that the crop is plied from the saddle, the long-handled ones with fewer bits of colour, belonging properly in the hands of the muleback rider.



## THE SADDLE MAKER.

To the person in search of a saddle, Sign No. 45 speaks directly and to the point. On a wooden frame set outside of his shop, the saddle maker places a sample of his workmanship, and on this basis, one opens negotiations, after examination, or passes on to the shop of a competitor. The Chinese saddle is an article of native handiwork indispensable to the missionary, and by this large and indefatigable class of traveller, it is even recommended for comfort. But to the average foreigner *en route* for the interior, the prospect of covering long distances on this wooden seat is none too attractive; though its asperities are rendered somewhat less insistent by the saddle rug, woven in gay colours, like any other Chinese carpet. Such saddles are no longer used in the Chinese army, that of the soldier being made of leather and built, more or less, on the lines of the English saddle.

## THE CARRIAGE MAKER.

At sight of the most conspicuous emblem, No. 46, the reader will doubtless immediately conjure up visions of ancient battlefields, with hordes of savage-looking Bannermen contending one against the other, as they are depicted in the *k'u ssu*, or embroidered panels, and in the old paintings, which have made them familiar to Western eyes.

Sign No. 46 is a reproduction of one of these old pennants, which connote the whole visible Manchu system, military and political. The famous "Eight Banners," it will be remembered, consisted originally of four—yellow, red, blue and white—under the system established by Nurhachu, the great founder of the Manchu nation, who has been likened to the Mongol Khan, Jenghis. The unit of this first consolidated Manchu army consisted of a captain's command of 300 men, called a *niulu-yachen*. Five of these units formed a Chala, and five Chalas made up a "Banner." No soldier was permitted to leave his captain's standard, and if wounded while absent from his post he was neither rewarded nor pensioned.

With the rapid growth of the army four additional banners were devised, and called the "Bordered Banners." The yellow, white and

blue were edged with red, and the red, with white; and the Emperor took command of the "Three Upper Banners," yellow, white and bordered yellow. The *Beres* (Manchu word for chieftain) took the rest. This "Eight-Banner" ground plan of the military organization was later extended over the political system, resulting in the nation's status being that of an army, with the Emperor as Commander-in-Chief. Every individual subject, however, was a slave (*nu-tsai*), and after the Manchus took the throne of China, the Chinese military officers were required to so refer to themselves in communications addressed to the throne. Whatever an official's position might be, *vis-à-vis* the throne he remained a *nu-tsai*, and the property of his *Bere*.<sup>18</sup>

On the battlefield the "Eight Banners" marched abreast of each other. The heavy infantry, bearing long knives and spears, formed the vanguard, and was followed by light-armed archers. Each foot unit also carried two "cloudy ladders," manned by twenty soldiers, whose duty it was to scale walls and ramparts. We shall come upon the intrepid leader of the Manchus in a subsequent chapter (Section VI) but for the present, suffice it to say that it was one of these "Three Upper Banners," white bordered with red, that one saw fluttering outside the shop of the maker of "Peking Carts" for government use; and in the days when the artisan was so distinguished from his fellow-craftsmen, his product was one of the gorgeous spectacles that enlivened the city streets and country roads. Its wheels were studded with gold, silver and bits of jade, and its upholstery, of rich silk, satin or brocade, befitted and indicated the rank of the occupant. It will be remembered that it was in one of these "springless carriages" that the Empress Dowager made her escape from Peking, on the collapse of the Boxer Rebellion, in 1900.

To-day the builder's work goes on as of yore, and his model remains the same. But its splendours have departed, like the glory of his imperial patrons; and having furled his banner, probably not without a sigh, he has laid it away. Sooner than substitute another, or perhaps dispirited by reflections on a dull and prosaic present, he allows the evidence of the shop's activities to proclaim the nature of his business, like so many of the humbler centres of industry, where some rude semblance of the inscribed signboard may, or may not, hang without.

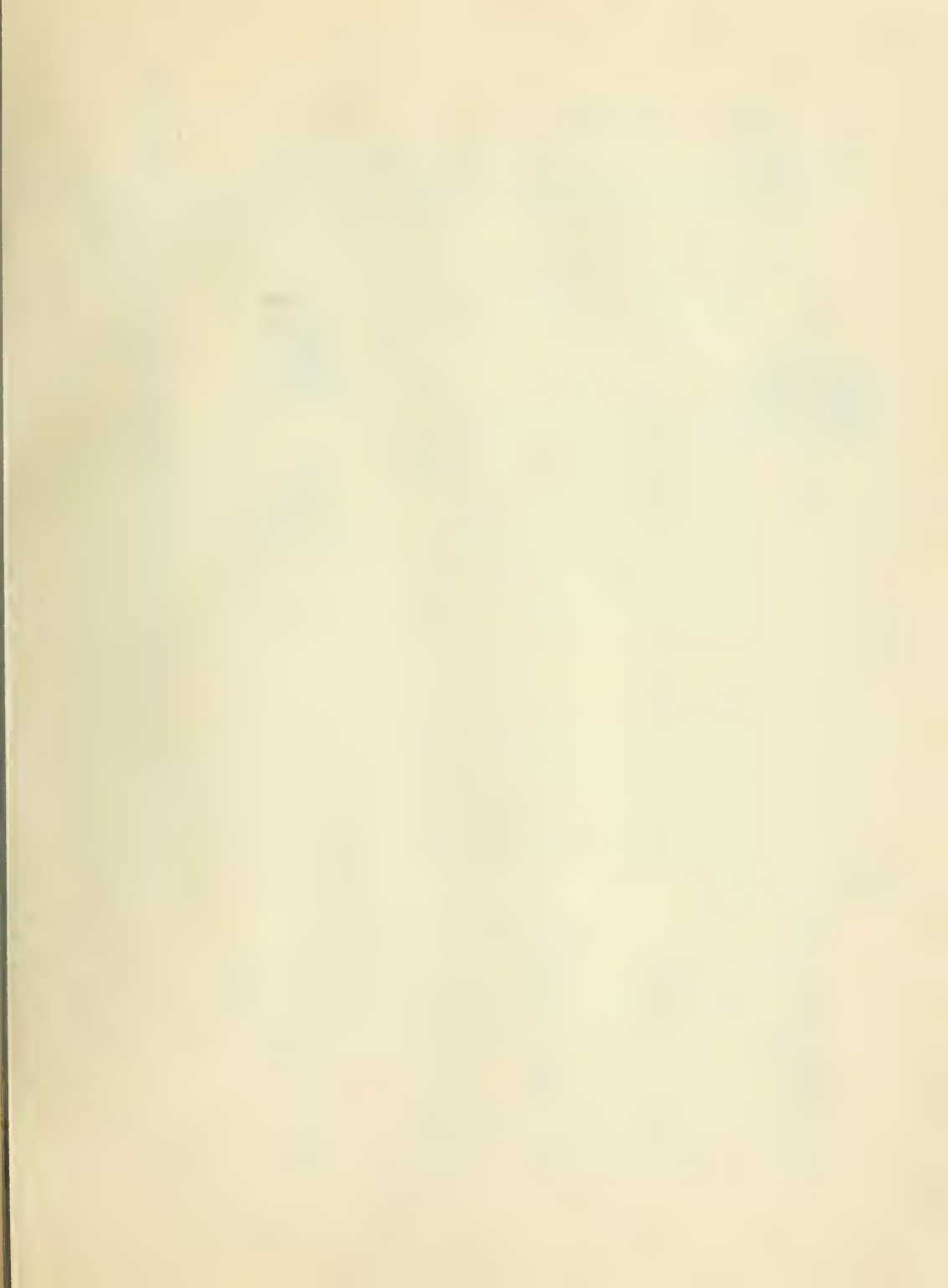
Considering that they are, after all, designed to carry but one passenger—and his luggage outside, in the rear—an extraordinary overplus of wood appears to be employed in the make-up of these springless carts, whose two massive wheels, supplemented by those of the ox-cart and wheelbarrow, have cut deep ridges in the old roads. All of these vehicles are now barred from the new highways with the construction of which, here and there, China is seeking to improve her means of communication, inspired thereto, in certain parts of the provinces of Shansi and Shantung by the engineering enterprise supported by funds of the American Red Cross, after the close of the Great War.

In the blue-hooded interior of the cart, one squats Buddha-wise, upon cushions, while the driver sits casually, with legs dangling, on the apron. One's rate of speed is governed by the amount of consideration which the latter shows for his beast, by walking beside the cart, now and then. When the traveller chances to be new to ways Chinese, these tender feelings manifest themselves with more than ordinary frequency, especially when an hourly rate of payment has been agreed upon. And, though from different motives, one soon learns to follow his example, after a taste or two of the rigours of a long journey by Peking cart, on which equipage one has, nevertheless, to depend directly one departs from the beaten path of China's inadequate railway system.

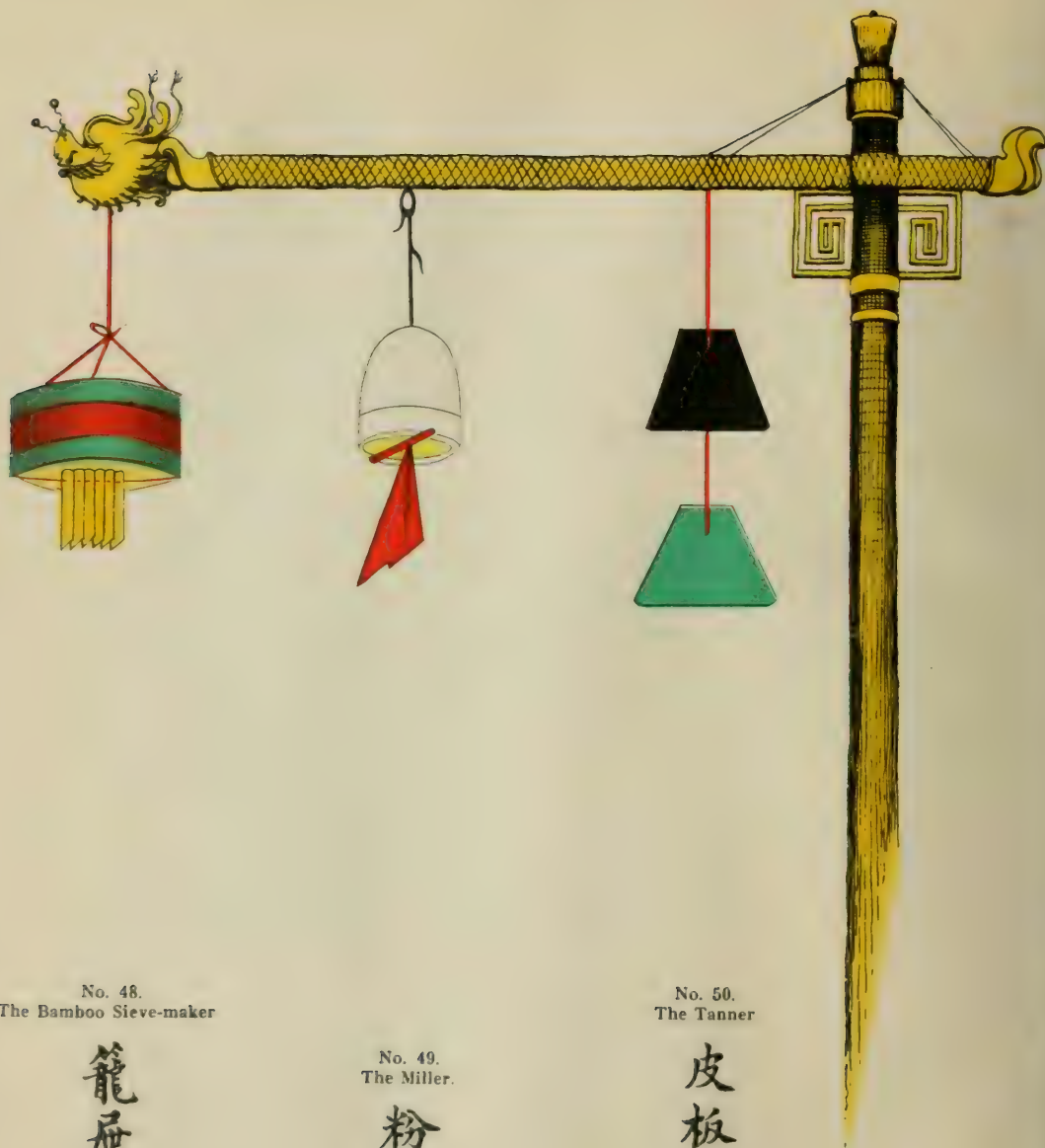
Picturesqueness, however, is by no means lacking in the present day aspect of these quaint vehicles, especially when a blue cotton awning extends forward almost to the head of the mule in the shafts; and the effect is considerably heightened when demure figures, with brightly gleaming eyes, flower-decked and polished black tresses, and gaily-coloured robes, are glimpsed within.

#### THE BAMBOO-SIEVE MAKER.

In No. 48 we have the sign of the workshop where the apparatus is made in which are cooked those steamed cakes which are stamped with the characters for happiness, and serve in the exchange of good wishes at holiday times. This contrivance is made of bamboo, of the size of the cauldron over which it is set; and when in action, the small strips of bamboo, which here are strung together underneath, are







No. 48.  
The Bamboo Sieve-maker

籠  
屈  
鋪  
幌  
子

No. 49.  
The Miller.

粉  
房  
幌  
子

No. 50.  
The Tanner

皮  
板  
鋪  
幌  
子



criss-crossed along the bottom. On this network, the cakes are laid for steaming. Perhaps the reader will agree that this is one of the most charming of the emblems, exhibiting as it does, two prominent traits of the Chinese character—the practical, and the instinct for picturesque effect. Surely none but a Chinese would perceive the decorative possibilities inherent in so homely an object as a bamboo sieve.

#### THE MILLER.

No. 49 is the miller's sign, for which he has chosen the upper and nether stones between which rice and beans are ground into flour. We have already encountered this commodity in our tour of the cake shops. The device is coloured white in imitation of the variety of stone used in the production of this flour, which the Chinese call "powder." Many of these "shops" appear to have been built round the bullock and his treadmill, being just large enough for the huge stones and the path trod by the blindfolded animal. Here also are ground up a variety of green bean, to be made up into stalks. The substance is starchy, and is used for food. Corn meal also emanates from this mill.

#### THE TANNERY.

Sign No. 50 carries a message to the leather boot- and shoe-maker, and to the tailor, or whoever may be in search of skins to be used as coat linings, or for the broad collars of overcoats, and the fur hats so much affected by the northern Chinese. In short, these black and green objects constitute the device of the tanner of leather and curer of pelts. Their form more or less faithfully suggests that of the knife used in cutting leather—an implement which will present itself in one of our subsequent tours,

#### THE TINSMITH.

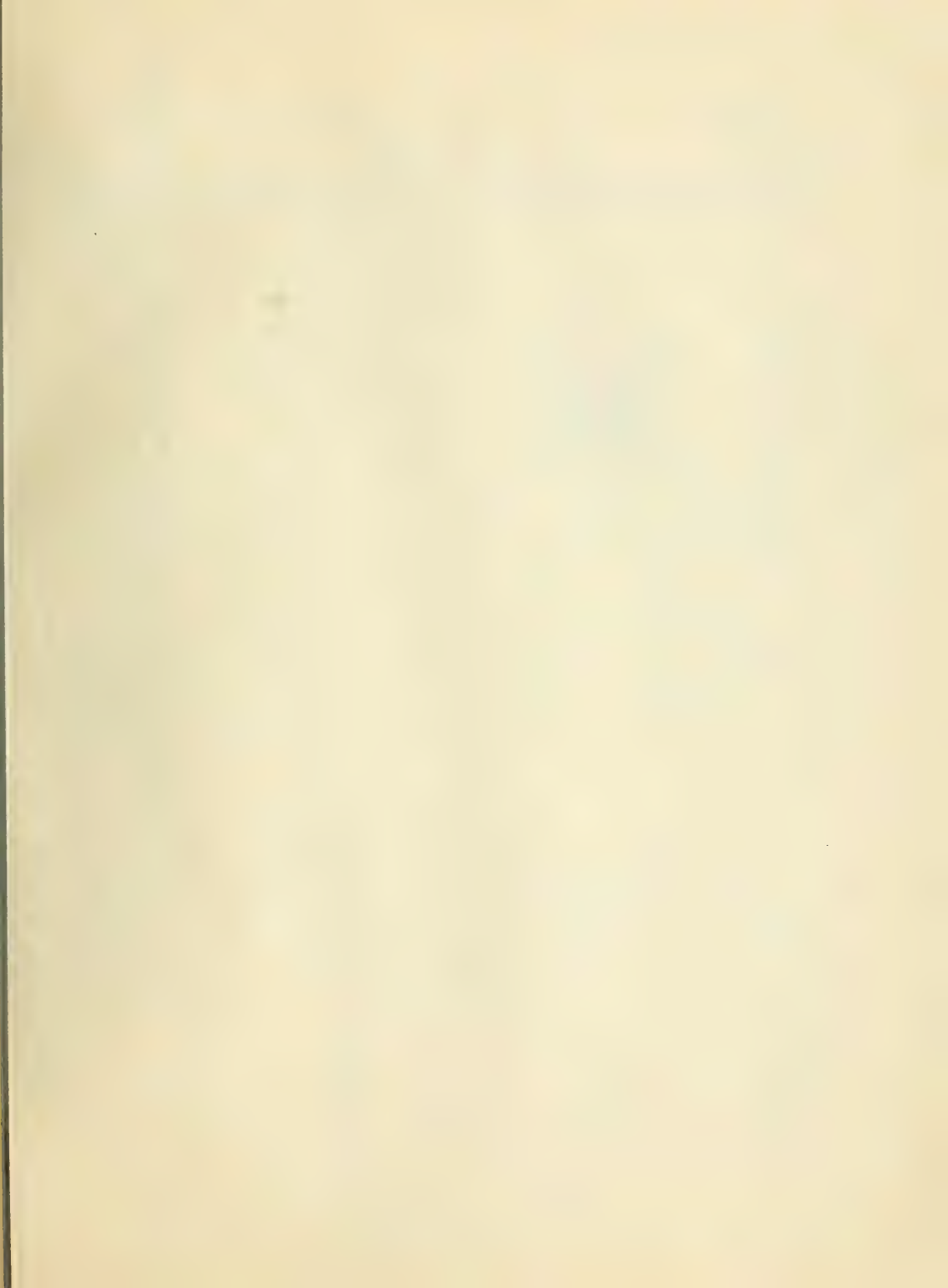
No. 51 is the sign of the worker in tin and pewter. Five metal discs in an up-and-down row is the device; and it is almost lost to sight in the multitude of pewter teapots, canisters, candlesticks, and

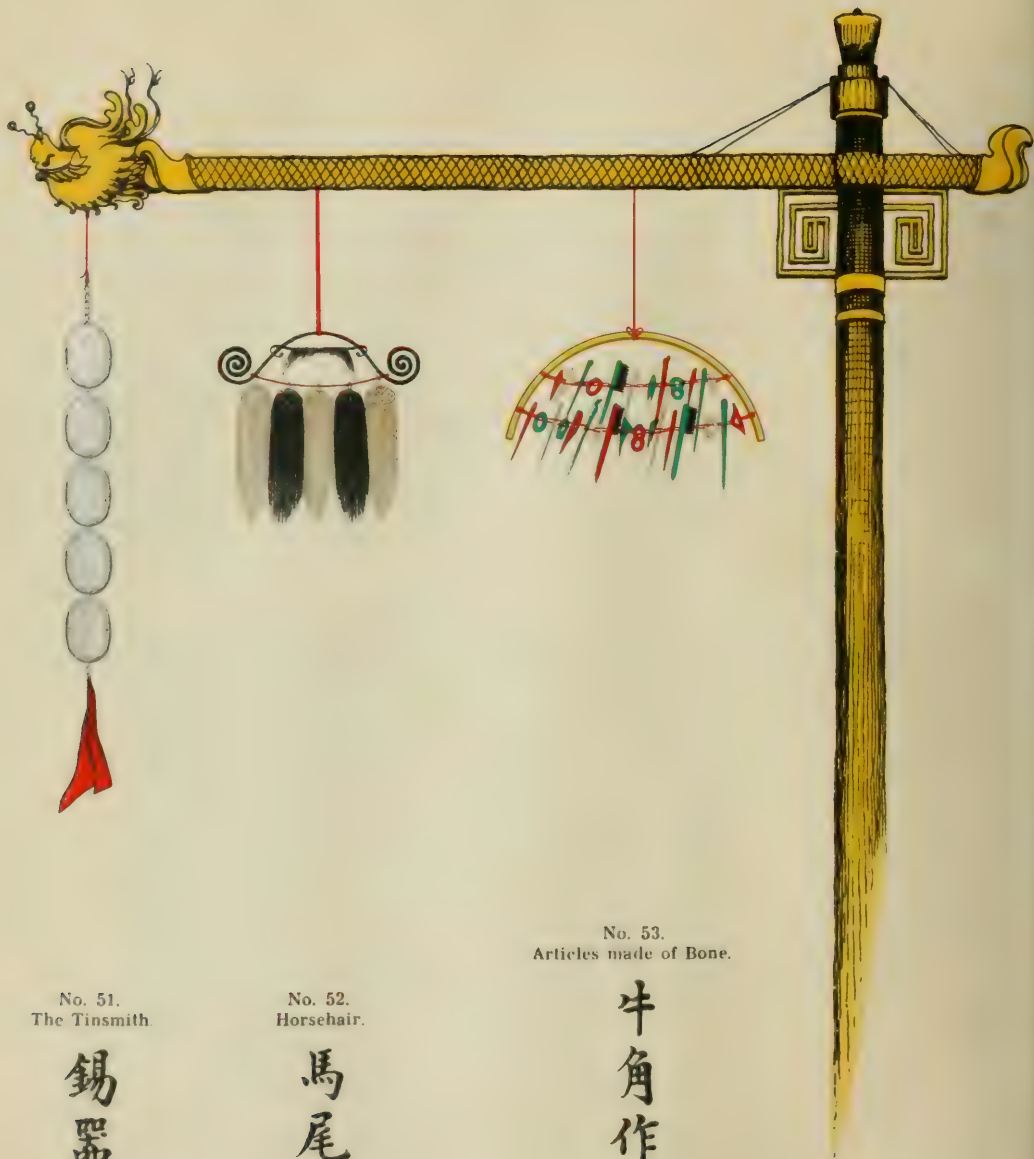
the receptacles often mistaken for teapots, but from which warm wine is poured. All of these, besides a bewildering variety of *et ceteras*, he hangs up against the shop front. Such exhibitions never fail to interest the traveller from countries where this combination of tin and lead is no longer in favour. In China, however, its position is an important one, established by ancient usage, which decrees that the candle-sticks, braziers and wine vessels used at funeral rites must be made of this metal—or tin, in cases of extreme poverty. Antique pieces of Chinese pewter have long since been absorbed by collectors, but the new ones are not without interest, especially when a liberal proportion of antimony imparts a smoother and more silvery finish. Ningpo pewter has long been famous, as well as that of Wenchow and Chaoyang, near Swatow.

#### THE WORKER IN HORSEHAIR.

In Sign No. 52, five tufts of horsehair, black and white, are suspended from the lower bar, and signify that the worker is engaged in the production of articles made from that material. Among these are the foundations for the coiffure which were shown in No. 40, the strings for the violin bow—the instrument itself carrying strings of silk cord—and a variety of very fine sieve, an article that, besides its many practical uses, has an important place among the superstitious observances of the people. According to one of the customs pertaining to birth, a fish-net is draped about the bed of the new-born baby, to protect it against evil spirits that threaten its safety during the first “hundred days” of its life. When a fish-net is not available, however, a sieve acts as its substitute, the idea being that the meshes of either represent so many watchful eyes that rivet themselves on the demons. A sieve is also hung at the rear of the bride’s chair, where it supplements the similar functions performed by a metal mirror. Either operate likewise, when suspended over the doorway of the room in which a person has recently died.<sup>19</sup>

Also displayed in the sign of the artisan, is an example of his workmanship—the theatrical beard fastened to the curved frame-work of the sign at the top. The peculiarity of Chinese beards as worn on the stage, is that their upper line seems to be that of an elongated and drooping moustache, while the long hair descends over the chest





No. 51.  
The Tinsmith

錫器鋪幌子

No. 52.  
Horsehair.

馬尾鋪幌子

No. 53.  
Articles made of Bone.

牛角作房幌子

in one line, thus covering the mouth. The beard shown in the picture is not so often seen as the long beard; and, as it leaves the mouth uncovered, it is probably used in plays depicting events of the Sung dynasty, when Emperors wore moustaches, a small tuft below the mouth, and whiskers sometimes trimmed to a point in front, or, again divided into four pointed parts, one on either side of the chin, and one in front of either ear.

#### THE BONE WORKER.

Sign No. 53 is that of the worker in bone—maker of hair ornaments, rings, brushes, etc. Prominently displayed among these articles strung from a bit of curved bamboo, is that popular adjunct to the toilet—the toothbrush—whose function is far better understood in China than is that of the handkerchief. The excellent teeth of the Chinese would abundantly testify to this fact, even if this were not one of the rites very generally performed in public. It is a most arresting sight, this latter, especially during the hot weather, when there is an incongruity about the operation as performed in a shop interior, where the line of the counter on which a brass basin is set for the occasion, marks off the naked and glistening body of the person plying the toothbrush! Meanwhile, however, at any time, and in all seasons, the ceremony is also to be witnessed as it is observed by the long-gowned citizen, who steps forth from his domicile and blithely proceeds with the business in the public street.

#### THE PAPER MAKER.

The maker of mounting paper pursues his daily task beyond Sign No. 54, as the familiar Chinese scroll plainly indicates. His product comes to mind most readily as the background of a priceless Sung or Ming landscape, or of the mellow old portrait of a great dignitary. But in this guise it would not be functioning in the highest expression of art, according to native opinion. It is only when inscribed with beautifully executed characters that it would be so regarded in China, where calligraphy, and not painting or sculpture, ranks as high art.



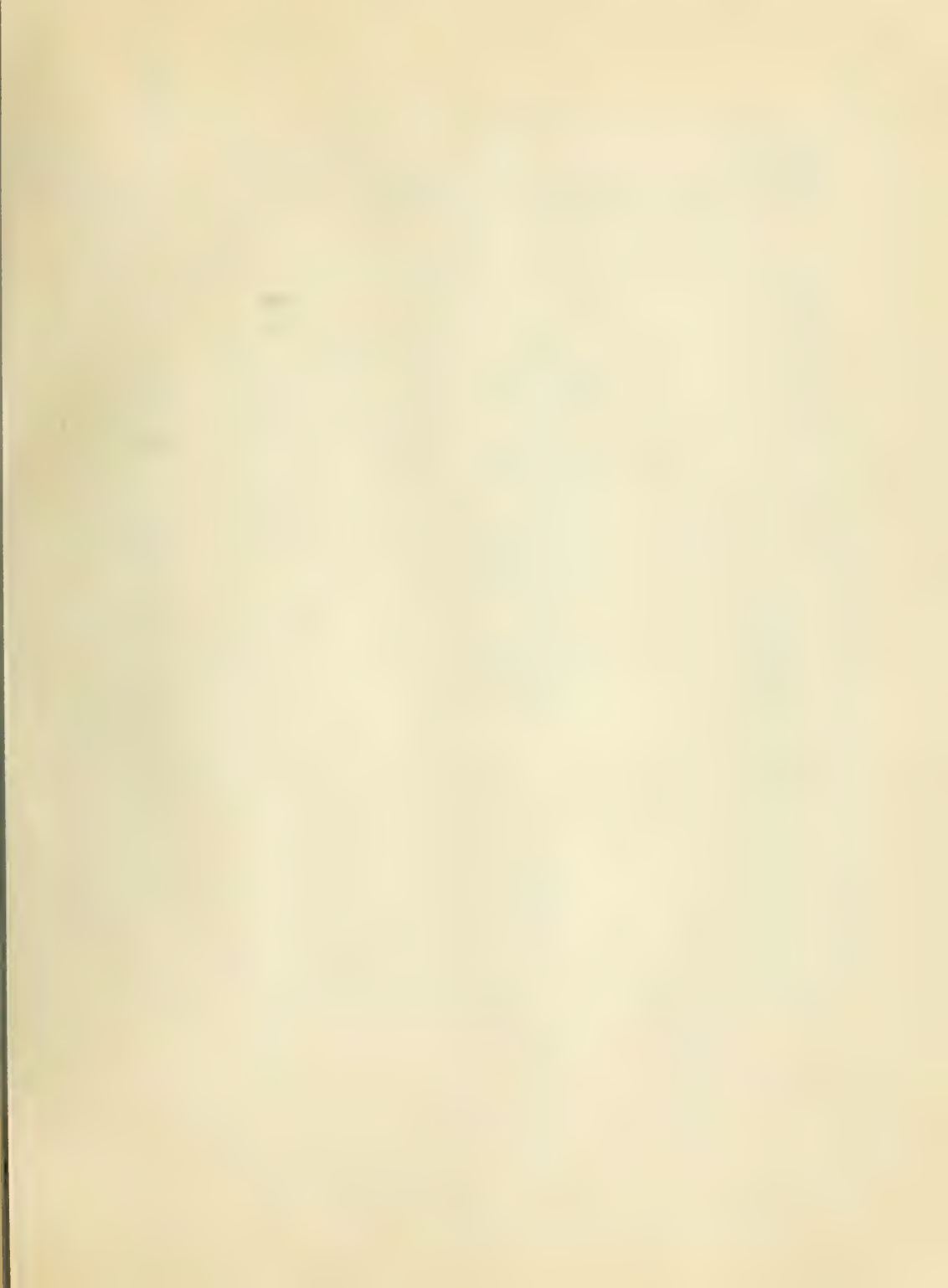
## ORDINARY PAPER.

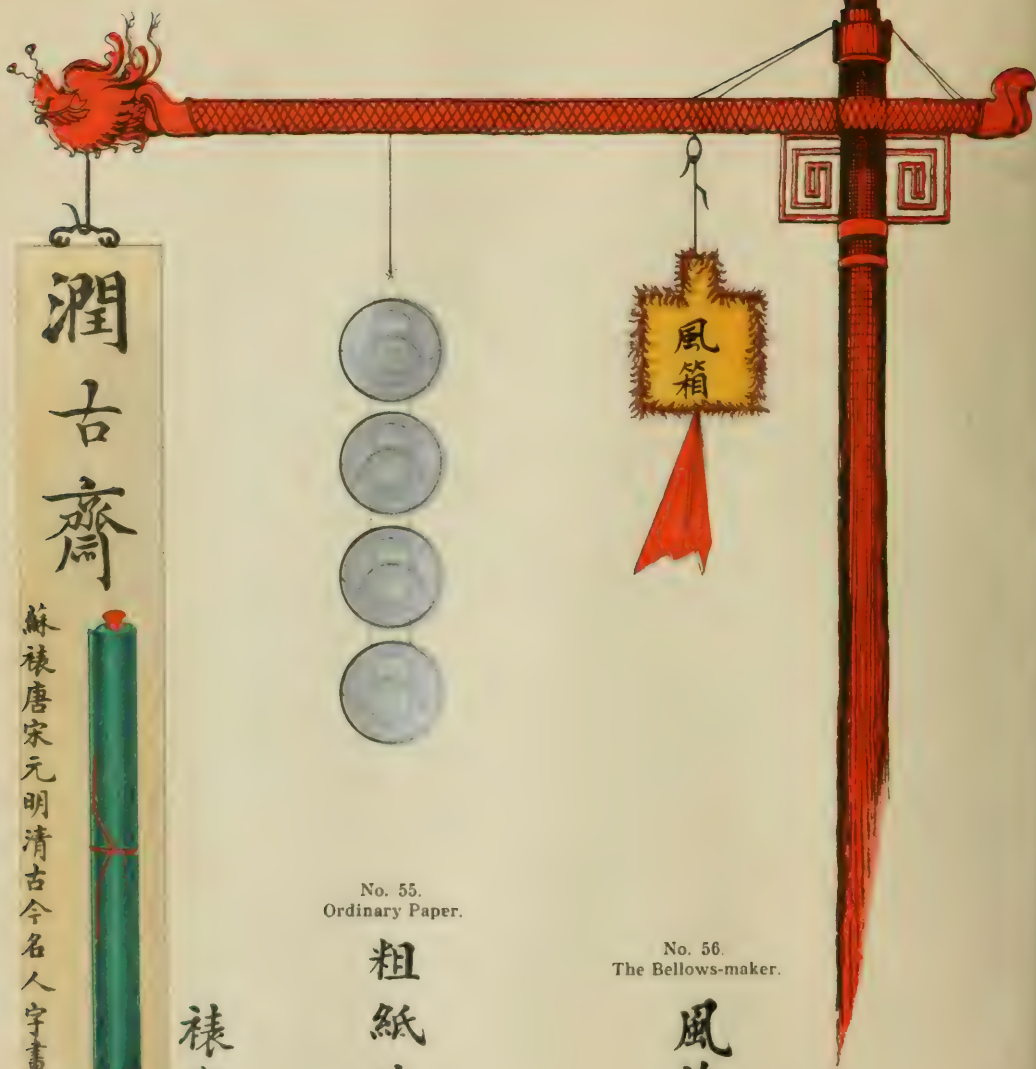
The adjoining sign, No. 55, is that of the maker of ordinary paper of all sorts, for common use; the four metal pans simulated in the device representing the vessels in which the pulp is prepared.

The process of paper-making in China is an extremely primitive one, notwithstanding the fact that the Chinese are credited with being the first people to produce paper from vegetable and other fibres. The first substitute for the bamboo tablet and stylus of ancient times was the silk and ink introduced in A.D. 75, at the court of the Emperor Ho Ti, of the Later Han dynasty. The innovation was shortly followed by the invention of paper, made from bark, tow, old linen, fish nets, etc., etc. Both were discoveries of the chief eunuch of the palace, the celebrated Ts'ai Lun, who later received the title of Marquis, in recognition of these services. Of him it is quaintly related that one day, having realized himself to be the object of dislike and intrigue on the part of the Empress, "he formally bathed, solemnly adjusted his hat and robes of state, and swallowed a dose of poison."<sup>20</sup>

The materials employed in the manufacture of paper at the present time are (1) rice straw, and a variety of reed known as *mao tzu*; (2) bamboo; and (3) the bark of various papyfera, notably that known as the "paper mulberry." From the rice straw is produced the coarsest and cheapest paper such as is used for packing, and in the manufacture of fireworks, paper money to be burnt at funerals, etc., etc., all of which are indicated in Sign No. 55. The better classes of paper, shown in Sign No. 54, are made from bamboo, which is treated with lime and soda, and reduced to pulp by a process that requires six months' time, and yields several grades. The poorest quality is used for window covering, taking the place of glass, and the best grades for writing and printing.

The product of the "paper mulberry" is that which is erroneously called "rice paper." It also is made in many varieties, from the thinner sorts that clothe the paper effigies of human beings and animals that appear in funeral processions, and likewise cover the trunks of paper money, to the very tough fabric with which umbrellas are covered. Artificial flowers are also made from the finer grade. In





No. 55.  
Ordinary Paper.

粗紙作房幌子

No. 56.  
The Bellows-maker.

風箱鋪幌子

蘇裱唐宋元明清古今名人字畫

No. 54.  
Mounting Paper

裱畫鋪幌子

潤古齋

the Customs reports paper is classified as: first quality, second quality, "joss" paper, mill paper, and paper, other kinds. Thus the "joss" paper, or that of the burnt offerings, is seen to be of the third class, though in point of quantities produced it far outranks any of the others.

The re-manufacture of old paper into new, it should be mentioned, was expressly forbidden under the time-honoured inhibitions against the improper use of the written character, one phase of which we found in our first chapter to have prevented the keeping of guild records. The universal lack of statistics of old China is explained on the same grounds. But this reverence for the marks of scholarship finds expression in many a custom that adds zest to the life of the foreign resident. It is demonstrated, for example, in the method of collecting waste paper at the door of the home. This other-where negligible incident of daily life becomes a ceremony in China, as may be deduced from the fact that it is a part of the restrictions that shopkeepers shall be enjoined from "wrapping meat, or perishable articles" in printed paper; and that, as we have said, it may not be used "in the manufacture of machine-made paper." The "desecration of manuscript in the making of *papier mâché*" is also prohibited. Affixed to street posts everywhere, are little baskets, bearing the legend: "For the respectful saving of inscribed paper." All of these provisions are enforced by means of a system conducted and supported by the guilds.

The paper waste of the household is carefully garnered by a servant especially assigned to the task, and kept in a receptacle held sacred to the purpose. Each morning, on the tinkling of the bell, and the peculiar call of the collector, at the outer entrance, the guardian of the waste-paper basket proceeds across the intervening courtyards, and proffering his more or less light burden, he stands by while it is solemnly transferred from his own, to the care of the public custodian by means of a sort of huge wooden tweezers. It is to be assumed that among these wardens of the waste paper is distributed the average percentage of human frailty, and that the cart of the paper collector will be found to contain may a bit of inscribed paper which has been allowed to become wrinkled, or damp. For one observes the latter prodding about among his precious cargo and extracting a bit here and there, to straighten and smoothe it out



with reverent touches of his rough fingers, or to lay it upon the ground to dry, in some open space. Meanwhile, the demeanour of the group of spectators which inevitably attends any public act in China is such as would be suitable to a religious service; and an opportunity to assist the paper collector in these ministrations of respect is considered a valued privilege by the humble folk of his own order.

Once delivered, the contents of the cart are solemnly burned, either under the auspices of the guild, or in small crematories "built for this purpose by philanthropic persons in the streets of towns and elsewhere." It is also to be noted, however, that in some of the more progressive communities a reaction has evidently set in against the wastefulness resulting from this ancient custom; for one learns, on inquiry, that a method has been devised by which inscribed paper may safely be utilized in the manufacture of more paper, by adopting the simple expedient of erasing the characters with sulphuric acid!

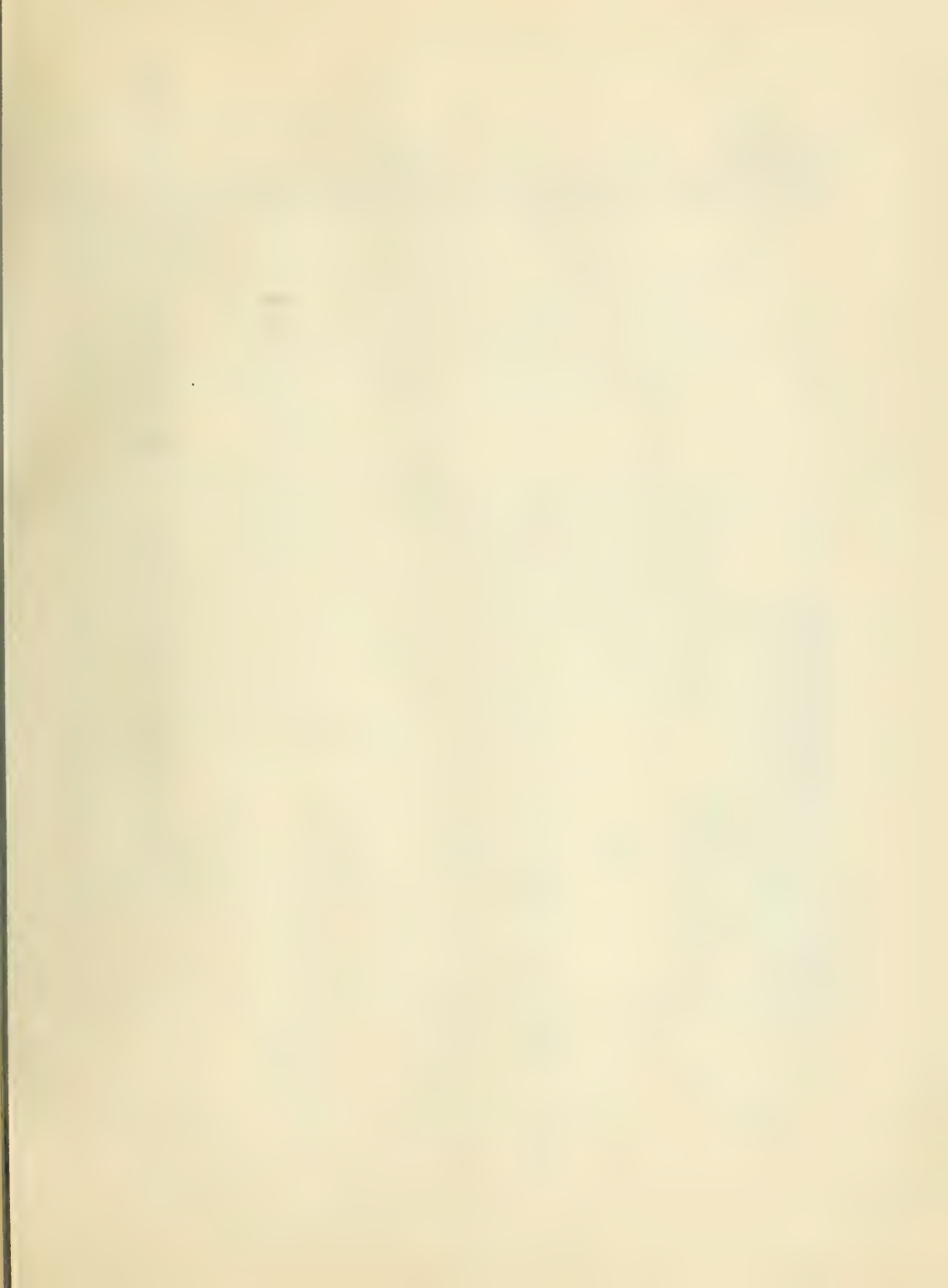
#### THE BELLOWS MAKER.

Sign No. 56—that of the bellows maker—pictures an object, which, it is safe to say, a very small percentage of readers will be able to identify. To the Chinese, it is the pivot around which the whole system of public feeding revolves—the hub of the wheel of life, so to speak. It is, in short, the diaphragm of the wooden air box, which is set beside the fireplace over which his food is cooked in the shops comprised in our first tour. The fuzziness of its outline is contributed by an edging of feathers, which prevent the escape of the air it forces into a pipe conducting to the firebed. The pumping falls to the lot of a small boy, who crouches on the ground to perform his task.

#### THE MATTING SHOP.

Sign No. 57 shows a roll of Chinese matting, made of flat strips of bamboo, plaited diagonally. In such shops one orders a matting cover for the stone floor of one's Chinese house. It is made in one piece, to fit all the nooks and crannies of each room in the neatest manner imaginable; and when laid down, after the floor has





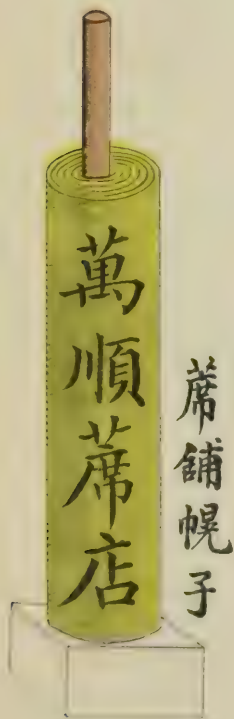


No. 58.  
Shoe Supports.

木頭底兜鋪幌子

No. 59.  
Candle Wicks.

燈草鋪幌子



No. 57.  
Matting.

been sprinkled with lime, it forms a most satisfactory and sanitary covering, as well as an effective background for the Chinese rugs.

Another of its uses is as a covering for the temporary sheds erected along the route of funeral processions, or in the courtyards of homes, during the funeral rites, and for weddings and other celebrations. Huge horticultural exhibitions in Shanghai have been held in such a shed, when interest in the blooms displayed vied with that aroused by the forest of bamboo poles composing the framework, constructed, as is customary, entirely without the use of nails.

#### SHOE SUPPORTS.

In No. 58, that hangs at the shop where the maker of wooden parts for women's shoes plies his trade, are the indications that this sign has survived the Ching Dynasty, since the uppermost of the four objects comprising it, is the large "heel" attached at the centre of the shoe, on which Manchu women formerly walked. Below it are the various props for the women with bound feet. Despite the numerical prominence of the ladies' shoe-shops of the port cities, it is largely the custom of the Chinese woman to construct her own shoes from these parts and material purchased at the shop encountered in the previous chapter, displaying Sign No. 29. Having achieved so much, she would either purchase the soles of the dealer, at No. 28, or await the call of the travelling shoemender already referred to, and entrust the completion of her task to him.

#### CANDLE WICKS.

Sign No. 59 is another relic of bygone, and less advanced, days. It resembles a graceful tassel, but the fringe is not of silk. It is, in fact made of candle wicks, which are now turned out by means of small hand machines.

#### THE BRASS WORKER.

The Brassworker's sign is No. 60. Obviously, he is possessed of a considerable trade, since he employs two signs to cover its extent.

On the first he displays the locks and ornamental bits of the metal applied to articles of furniture and to chests. In the second appear the gongs, which in conjunction with other instruments are employed alike at China New Year, weddings and funerals, their function being the intimidation of evil spirits constantly on the watch to obstruct the path of the souls of the departed on their way to the Western Heaven, or to lay obstacles in that of the newly wed about to cross the "Silver Stream," as matrimony is poetically referred to in the scrolls that decorate the walls wherever a wedding ceremony is to take place.

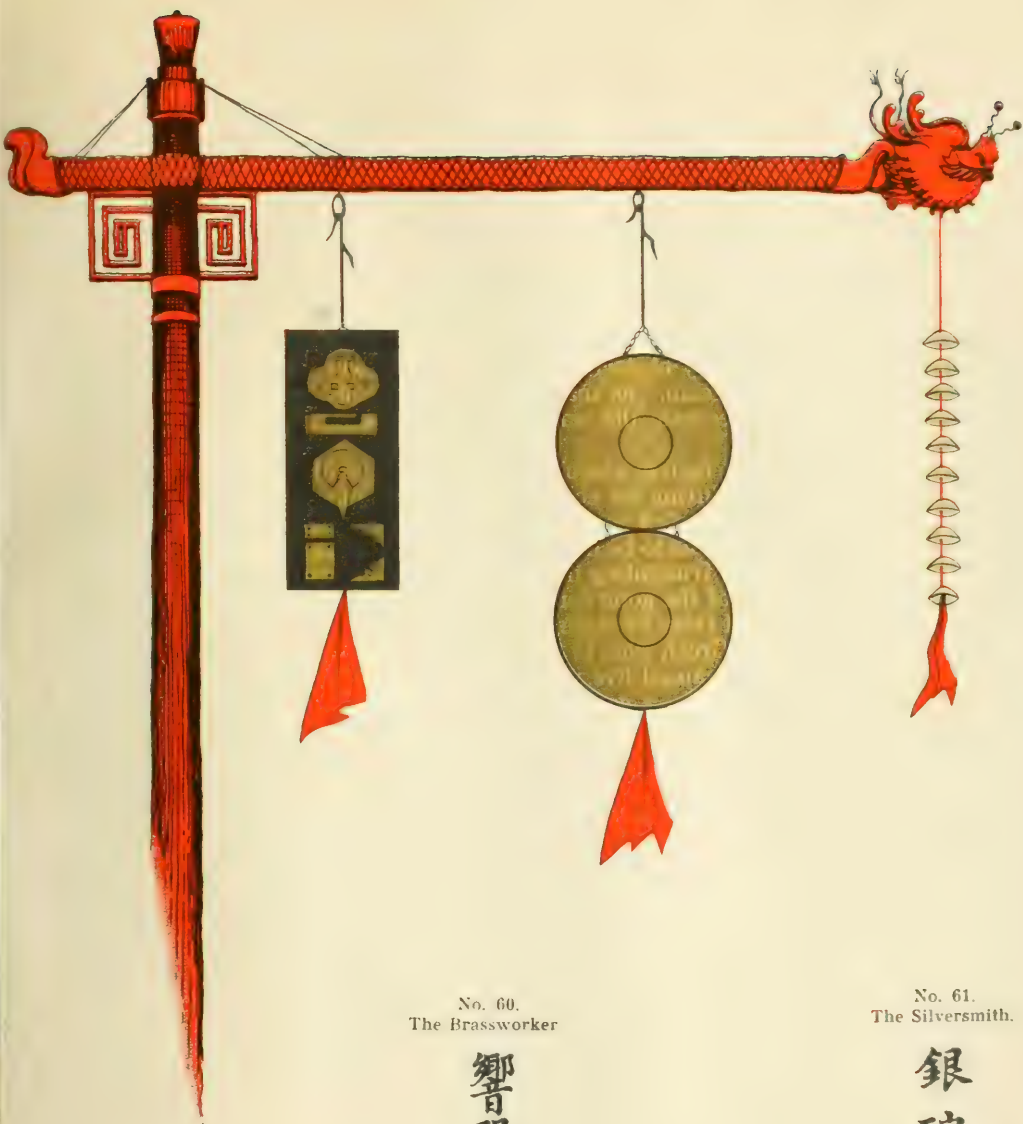
The gong figures eloquently, also, along with other earsplitting contrivances, during an eclipse, which the Chinese interpret as the attempt of some fell monster of the air to devour sun or moon, whichever happens to be in obscurity. The greater the din the better the chances of frustrating the demon, is the philosophy.

This use of the gong for sounding a note of warning is probably a development from its original function established by the illustrious ruler, Yu, the Great, who, in the desire to render himself approachable by the people, caused five instruments to be hung at the entrance of his court—a drum, a gong, a stone instrument, a bell, and a rattle. They were to be used in the following wise: Whenever one of his subjects wished "to discourse with him upon any of the virtues which should adorn a monarch," he was to come to the palace and beat upon the drum. The sound of the gong announced to the king that audience was desired by someone who disapproved of his conduct. The stone instrument proclaimed the bearer of important news; the bell announced one who had personal grievances to communicate; and the rattle, one who wished to make appeal from judicial decisions.

The system had its disadvantages, evidently, for Chinese history naïvely records the fact that such was its popularity that the poor King was ever afterward "late at his midday meal."<sup>21</sup>

#### THE SILVERSMITH.

No. 61 is the Silversmith's sign. Ten of the little bowls for soya and other sauces are strung one above the other, but it goes without saying that any article composed of silver, except, perhaps delicate pieces of jewelry, are made in the shop.



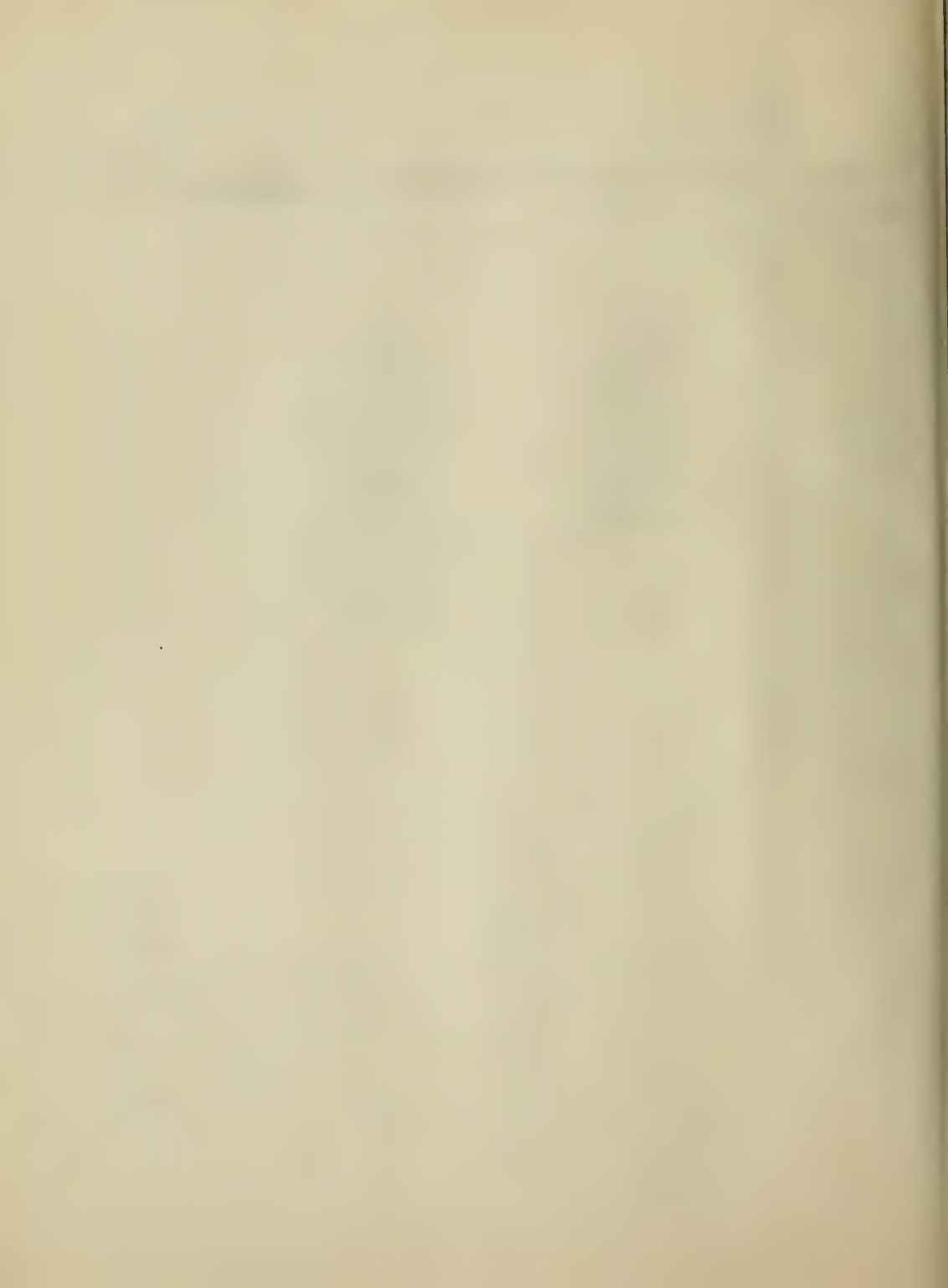
No. 60.  
The Brassworker

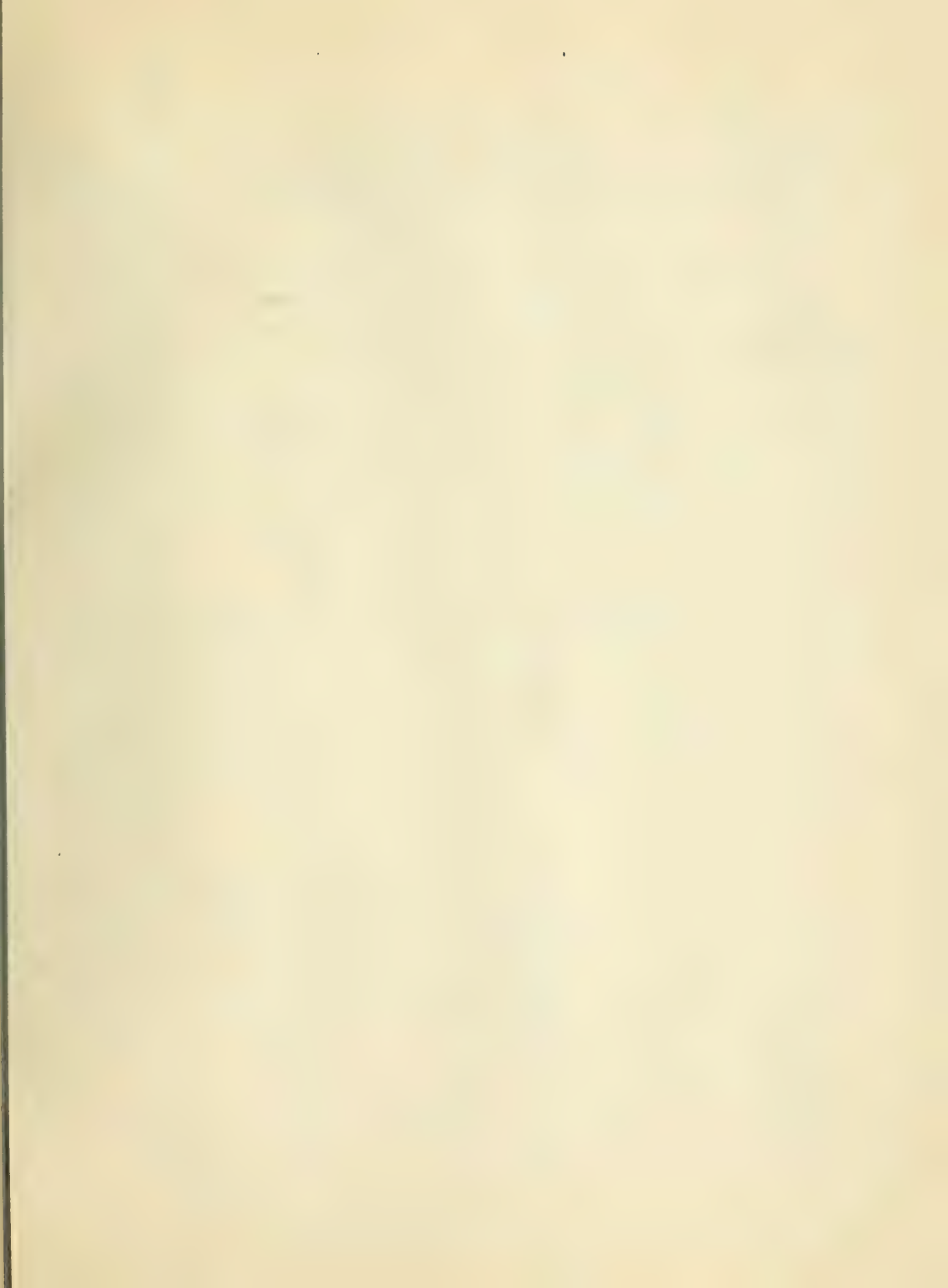
響器鋪幌子

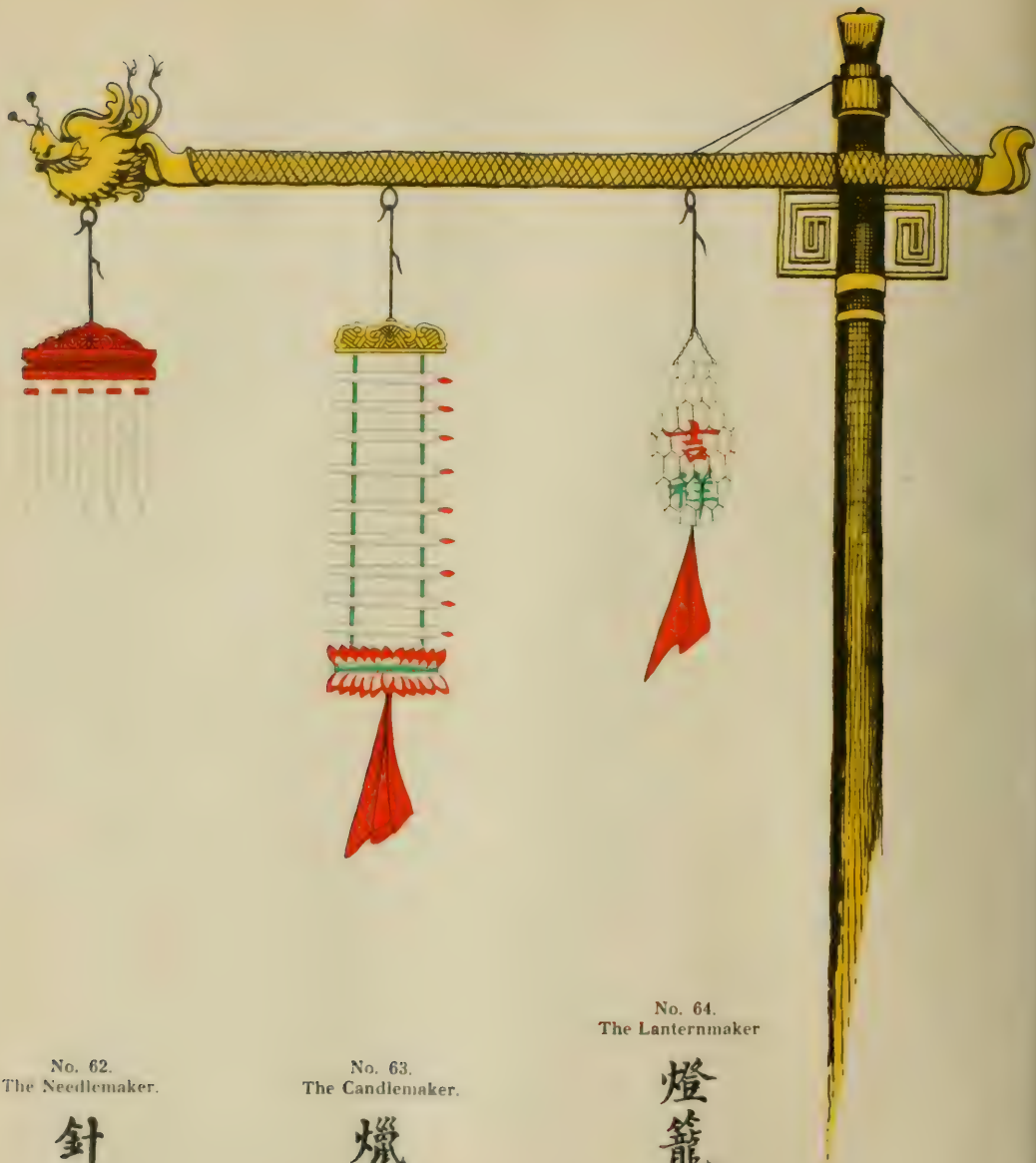
No. 61.  
The Silversmith.

銀碗鋪幌子









No. 64.  
The Lanternmaker

燈籠鋪幌子

No. 63.  
The Candlemaker.

蠟鋪幌子

No. 62.  
The Needlemaker.

針鋪幌子

## THE NEEDLE MAKER.

It is probable that the five elongated cones hanging from a framework of redwood, in Sign No. 62, would not immediately suggest to the reader that very common implement, the needle. Such, however, is the import of the sign. The needle maker's product did, formerly, resemble these objects, the Chinese preferring their needles much shorter than they are made in the West; and in the days when this sign was conceived, the head of the needle was not flattened, as it now is, in imitation of the foreign one. Needles purchased in native shops to-day are scarcely to be distinguished from the foreign article, even as to length. The thimble of the Chinese is a narrow metal band worn between the first and second joints of the middle finger, and the movement of the needle is away from, instead of toward, the body.

## THE CANDLE MAKER.

The white objects arranged in nine tiers over a lotus blossom motif, in No. 63, represent candles. The red projection is the reed—the spinal column, as it were, of the candle which, being hollow, permits of its being slipped over the metal pin in the top of the candlestick. The wick of the candle is wrapped around the bit of reed, and the two burn steadily together. The “grease” is made from the seed of the tallow tree, which also yields the oil that one sees in the little bowls whose floating wicks faintly illuminate the Buddhist shrine, and play a peculiar part in funeral ceremonies, as we shall see later on in our tours.

## THE LANTERN MAKER.

No. 64 is the sign of the lantern maker; and at the word “lantern” the reader will immediately conjure up visions of the famous street in Peking, where, however, No. 78 would be lost to sight, and sought for in vain. This is the artisan catering to the humble citizen, who needs this small aid to find his way along the country road. Split bamboo forms the frame, which is encased in paper, but they would not be made in the form of a flower vase, as is the case with the sign.

For some reason the bright red characters, *teng lung*, (*teng*, light, and *lung*, lantern; hence, literally, "lantern light") are seen painted on even the cheapest of lanterns, the custom having been formerly for the lantern to bear its owner's name, and sometimes that of its maker. In the case of a high official many other characters and devices appeared; and it is said that in the old days, during the Feast of Lanterns, when every pair of hands in the kingdom had to bear this votive offering, that of the Viceroy of a province often represented a value of £100 to £150. One of the most interesting of Chinese lanterns—and the only comparatively costly one—is that made of ox- or goat-horn, almost as transparent as glass. It is of a golden colour, and simply inscribed, with red characters only. It plays a prominent part at elaborate family festivals, and is not, of course, carried in the streets.

#### THE COLOUR GRINDER.

Nos. 65, 66 and 67 are signs that have to do with the painter's and the dyer's trades. No. 65 is a replica, though smaller in size, of a sign which we shall encounter in our next tour, when we shall find it serving the dealer in raw gold, with, however, one note of difference. As was to be expected, no explanation of this coincidence in design has been forthcoming. In this case, No. 65, the characters announce that ground colour, whether for the painter or the dyer are procured here. No. 67 is used in conjunction with it, to signify a more diversified stock; but however much this may seem to promise, it does nothing to counteract one's memories of unfortunate experiences at the hands of the Chinese dyer maintaining the usual "Clean and Dye-shop." One is, indeed, led to the conclusion that the only survivors of the lost art of dyeing in China are probably in the employ of the great exporters of silks and satins.

#### THE PAINTER.

No. 66 is the sign of the painter, who employs for his purposes the sheep's bladder in which lacquer is kept. It bears some resemblance to the bunch of coarse cloth, or cotton wool, with which



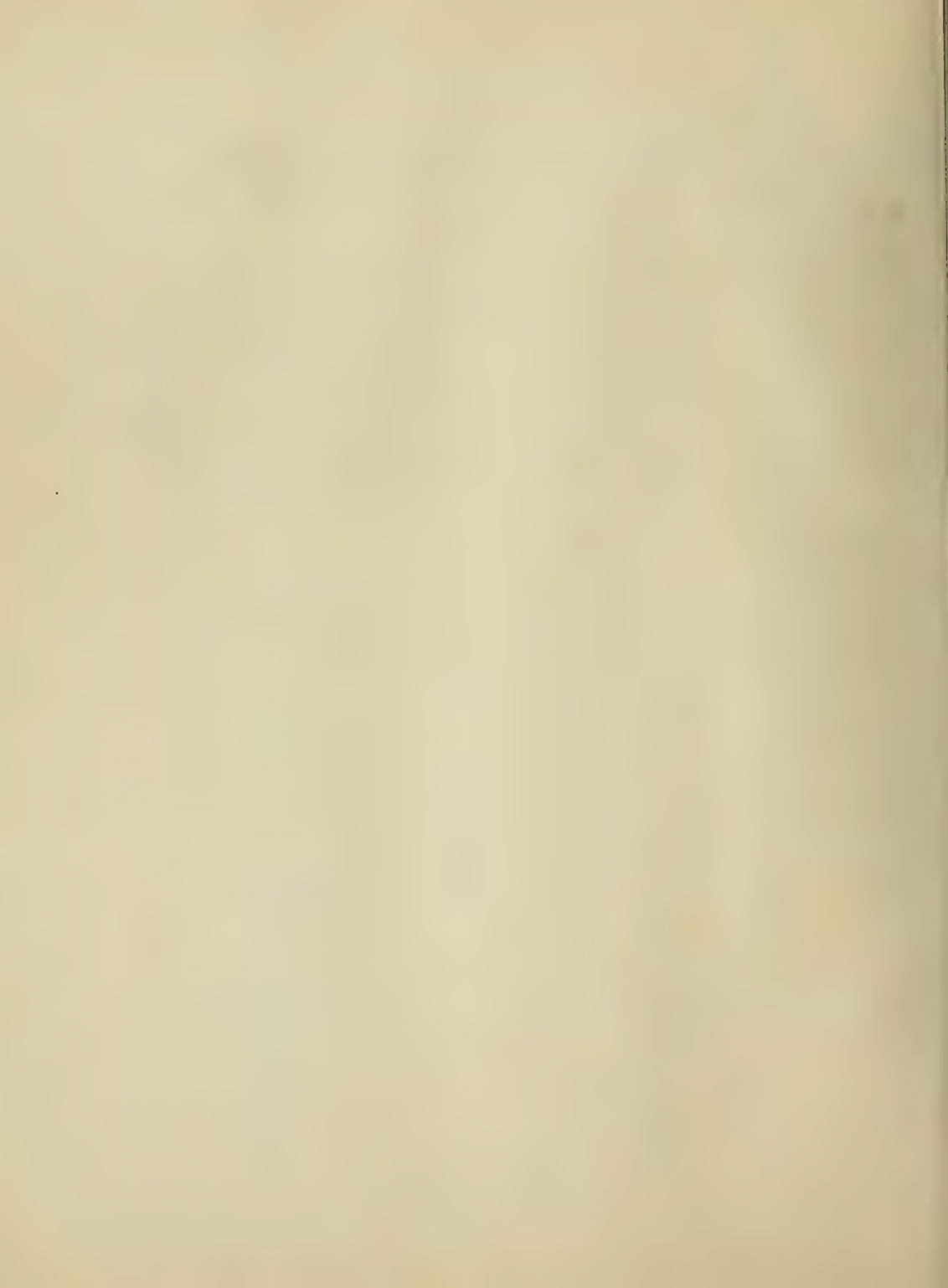


No. 65.  
The Colour Grinder.

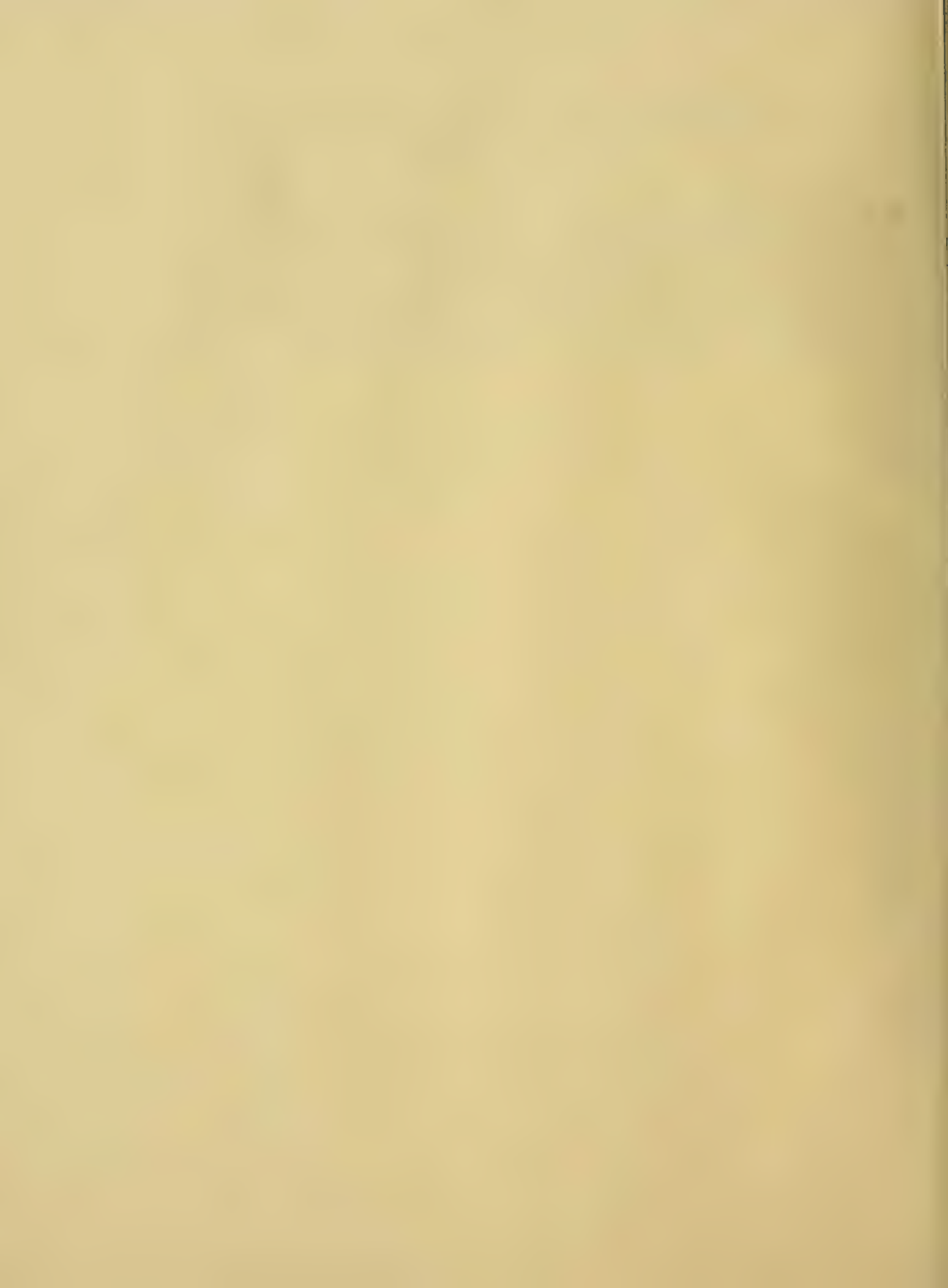
顏料鋪幌子

Nos. 66 67.  
The Painter.

油漆鋪幌子



paint is applied in this country, where the use of the paint brush is not yet understood. This is one of the numerous instances of waste, in China, for whether it be the framework of a house, or the finest pieces of furniture, stain or paint is smeared on in this manner; and on observing an army of small boys so engaged, with hands and arms covered half way to the elbow in the liquid colour, one is led to calculate as to how much of it is lost daily by this method.



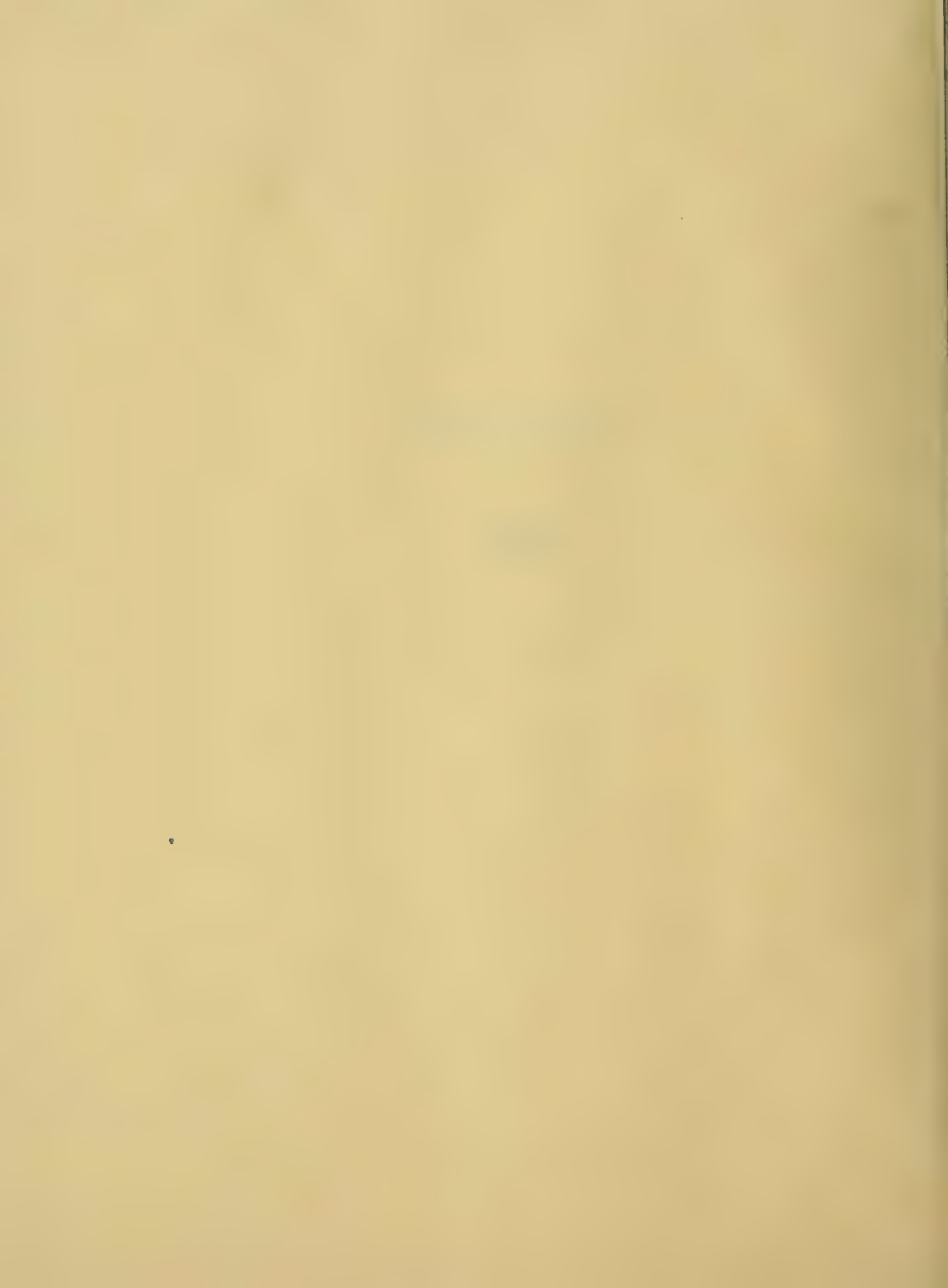
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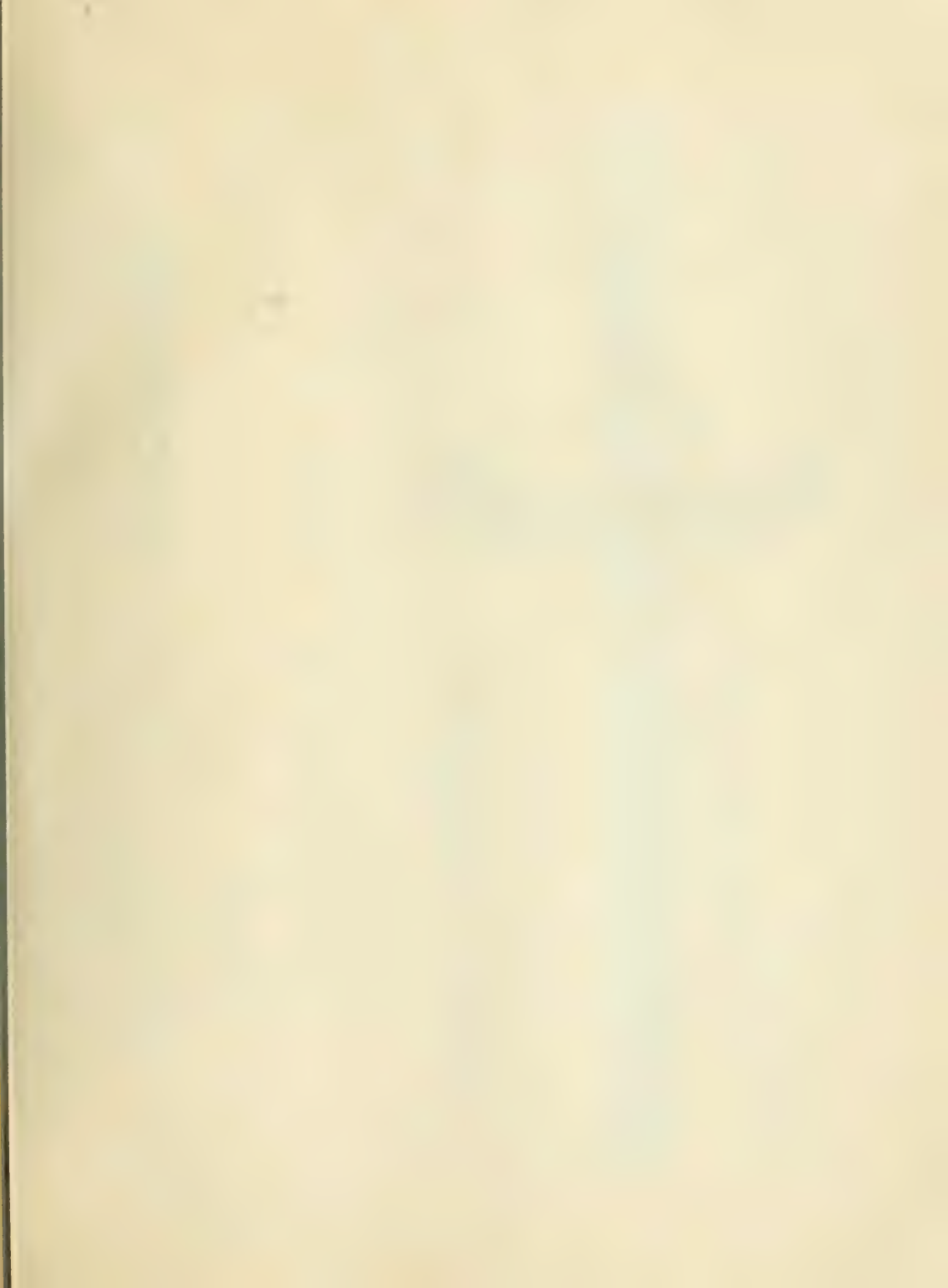
HIS FUNDS

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No. 68.  
The Pawnshop

當舖幌子



No. 69  
The Exchange Shop.

錢鋪幌子

## Chapter Seven:

### *Two Phases of Exchange.*



NE of the most interesting of our glimpses into *les mœurs* of the Chinese people is that afforded by the group of symbols bearing on the money question—that most vexatious of all problems confronting the foreigner in China, whether or not he belong to the world of foreign commerce. It elucidates itself but little to the old resident, though the tourist fancies that his perplexities over “big” and “small” money, and the variations in its value as he moves from province to province, are due to his short acquaintance with the country. As will be observed, five symbols comprise this group, and it will be remarked immediately that the first three bear a triangle of red cloth of exceptional length and prominence. The first and third of the emblems so distinguished, Nos. 68 and 70, are pawnbroker’s devices, while the second, No. 69, is that of the moneychanger; and the reader is given his choice as to what may be the best of the several theories advanced in one of our early tours, as accounting for the addition of this bit of colour to the

shop symbol. Is it to be taken as signifying happiness, fulfilment, plenty, the desire to attract notice, or as a mere adjunct to the effectiveness of the design?

In No. 71, on the other hand, the red colour note is found to be of normal proportions. This is the shop in which silver is converted into "shoes"—taels, or sycee, as they are variously called, with what degree of accuracy we shall have occasion to observe later.

No. 72, again, is without this decorative touch altogether, but the belief that the red cloth belongs to the pattern is refuted by the fact that the grinder of colours uses exactly the same device as this, plus the bit of cloth.

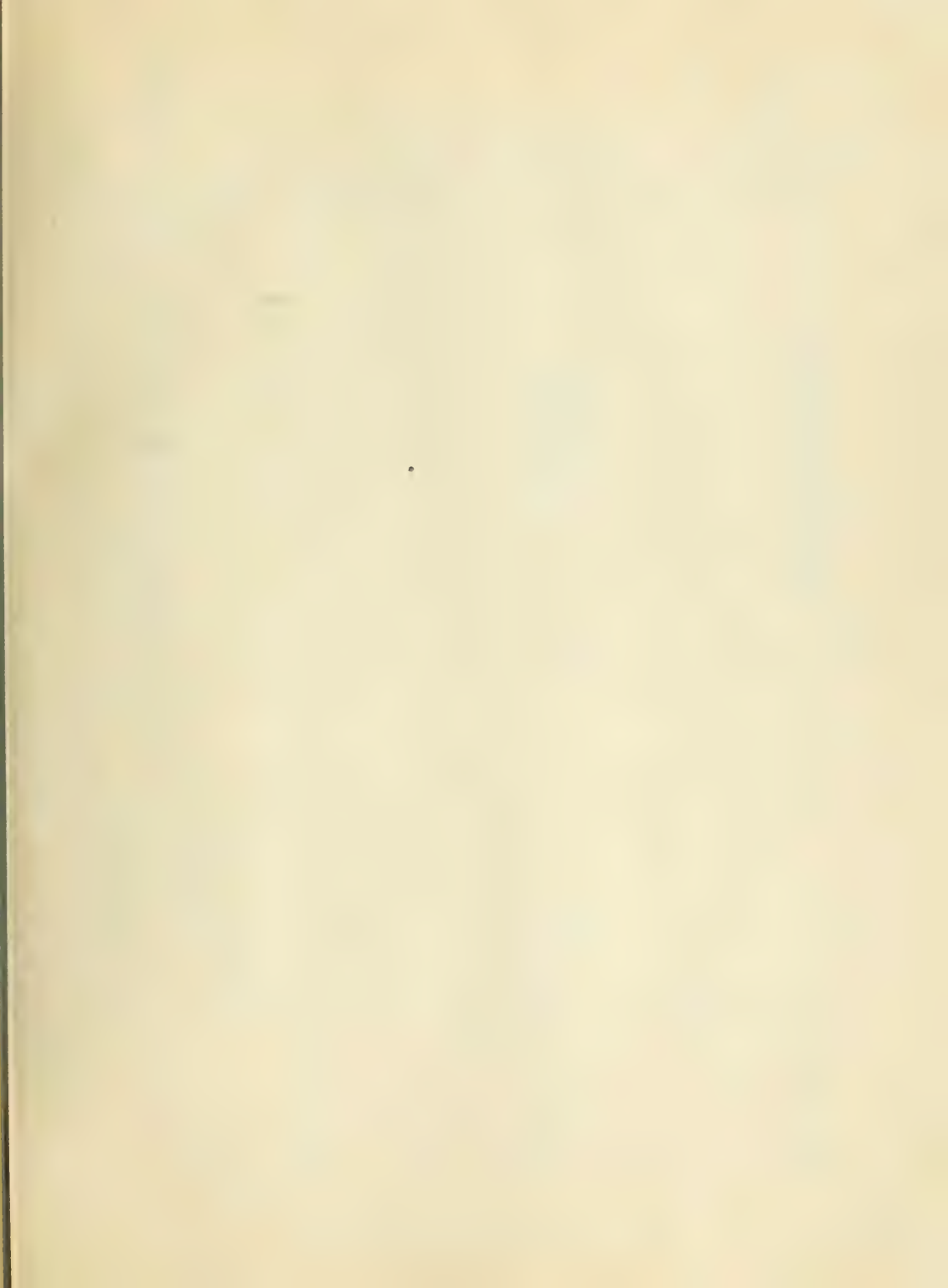
This symbol, No. 72, is the sign of the dealer in raw gold, a metal that occupies a negligible relation to the subject of money in China, since years of persistent effort have thus far failed to place her among the gold-standard countries of the world; wherefore she stands today as the only nation maintaining a currency based on silver. Thus we may postpone consideration of the gold-dealer's emblem and proceed to examine the other four symbols in our section.

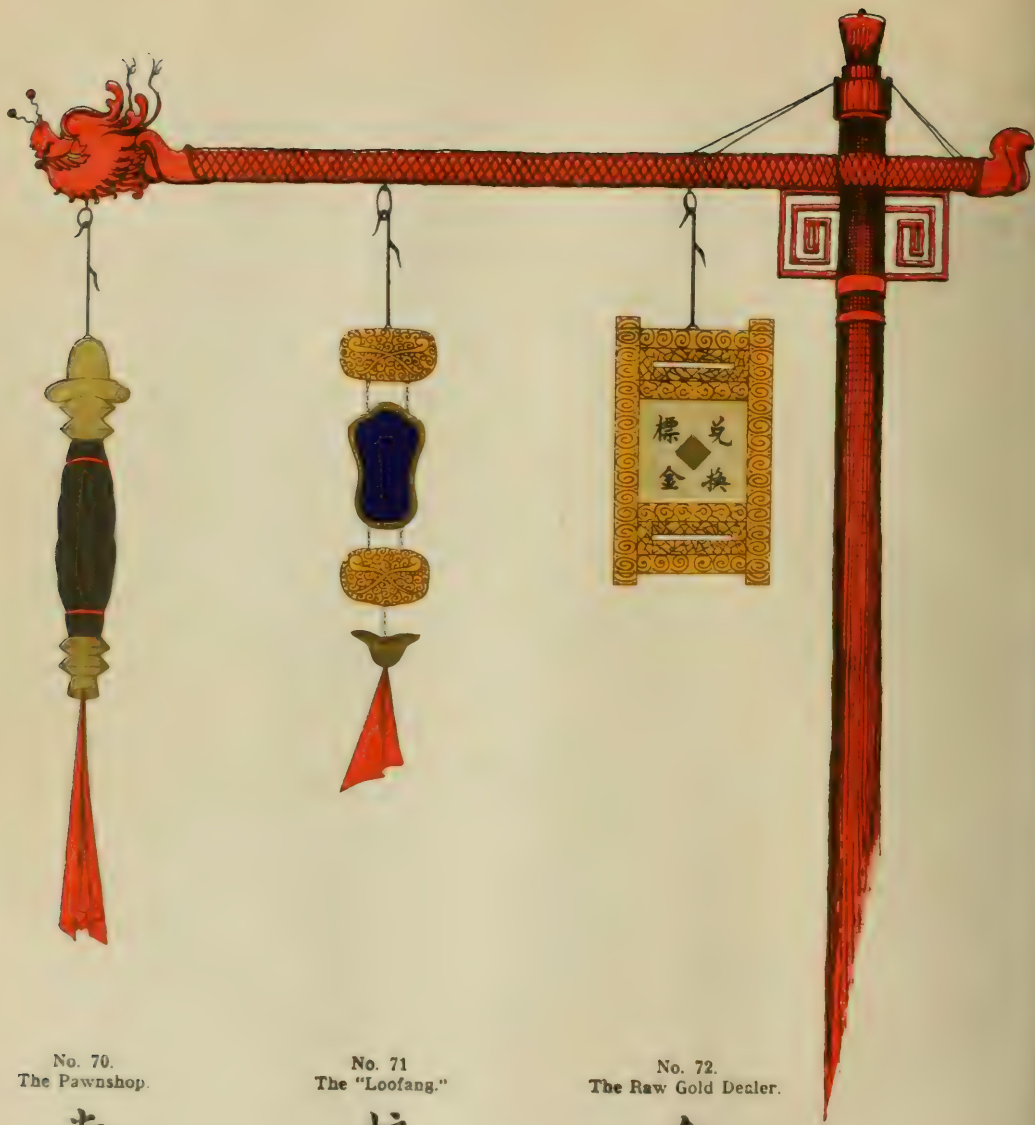
#### THE PAWNSHOP.

If the resplendent and important-looking sign of the pawnbroker, No. 68, appear almost to eclipse its neighbour, the moneychanger's sign, No. 69, the fact is exactly in line with that which happens in real life; for while the exchange shop easily eludes notice, the pawnshop never fails to obtrude itself upon the attention.

This is especially true of Shanghai, where the pawnbroker's blatant call is achieved by means of six-foot characters painted in black against an outer wall of brick, that rises stark and white from the pavement. The entrance is a mere opening cut into the wall, sometimes surmounted by a frieze of carved figures, but more frequently quite devoid of ornament. Within, and directly opposite this opening stands another short section of wall, which in Peking would be called a dragon screen—an obstruction set in the path of evil spirits, which shuts off the direct view from the outside, of whatever may lie beyond. Such is the exterior aspect of the "House of Sinister Meaning"—if it would be so regarded by its patrons, which may be doubted—in Shanghai.







No. 70.  
The Pawnshop.

當舖幌子

No. 71  
The "Loofang."

炉房幌子

No. 72.  
The Raw Gold Dealer.

金店幌子

In Peking, however, its outward appearance is like that of other shops. It is ornate with carvings, and, if the business be extensive, a stone pedestal is set up at the entrance, and thereon is mounted the splendid black and gold pole, topped with a silvery knob, and with a gilded and scaly dragon crossing it, from whose head is suspended the pawnbroker's symbol, seen again in No. 70. The smaller pawnshops would use the latter device without the decorative superstructure, which, with its cords and ornamental gilt, somewhat suggests the hilt of a sword.

Within, in an atmosphere of an inward- instead of outward-flowing tide of trade, one may imagine a figure seated enthroned, in calm and half-amused contemplation of a world strangely and blindly bent on acquisition by hard work, instead of by the application of such a philosophy as his, which concerns itself with nothing, in the knowledge that as much as he needs, and immeasurably more, will be brought to him with the minimum of exertion on his part. As to his estimate of the value of such energy as he is called upon to expend, sixteen per cent. represents the minimum, and sixty per cent. the maximum rate;<sup>22</sup> and while the faces of those who lay their offerings upon his altar may be drawn and haggard with care, and the bodies stooped and misshapen with toil, his own visage grows ever rounder and fuller—and doubtless his abdomen as well—while his "maskee" smile expands to the dimensions of that of the Laughing Buddha.

#### THE DEALER IN RAW GOLD.

One can fancy his mirth particularly stirred at thought of some of the activities suggested by Symbol No. 72, which hangs outside the shop where the gold digger brings his harvest of little grains, more or less laboriously garnered; and where, besides, bits of old jewelry may be sold, or exchanged for others, in accordance with Chinese custom. The contrast between the two emblems 69 and 72, and all that is thus implied, presents the temptation of interrupting for a moment the continuity of our series, for the purpose of considering some of the features of the latter.

Roughly made of wood, painted in yellow, and with a scroll design in black, primitive in effect—like the methods of those to whom it speaks—the raw gold dealer's device is as crude as the pawnbroker's

is artistically impressive. This is, doubtless, much as it should be—especially from the latter's point of view. Humanity he would observe, is his field; and not those distant and lonely areas where Mother Nature reigns supreme. True, there are districts, one learns, in which she carries those interesting little pellets tucked so lightly into her bosom that her children have but to prostrate themselves, and brush about in the loose sand with a feather—supplemented from time to time with a vigorous breath—in order to retrieve and transfer them to the little bag worn under the chin, by a string tied round the neck. But simple as it sounds, there would be little to appeal to a man of talents in the dust-laden, bleak, and wind-swept atmosphere of life on the Mongolian plains. And "man must appoint himself to the task best suited to him," doubtless would be the comfortable reflection of our gifted philosopher.

#### THE EXCHANGE SHOP.

Meanwhile, however, on turning back again to the path from which, momentarily, we had stepped aside, we come once more upon the moneychanger's emblem No. 69, which, at first glance, appears to bear so close a resemblance to that of the pawnbroker, as to be almost indistinguishable from the latter. Careful examination, however, reveals the point of difference. While the pawnbroker's device simulates a skein of black silk cord, symmetrically bound round, at intervals, with a single thread of the silk, the emblem of the exchange shop proves to have a straight body, gilded, and either made of wood, or of bamboo, with fine markings intended to suggest two strings of the coins having a square hole in the centre, and called *cash*. Until the birth of the Modern China, these ancient relics of the early minting methods of the Chinese had been the universal currency of the lower classes, whose business was done, and computations made on the basis of these "strings of cash." They are known as *tiao*, and consist of anywhere from 600 to 1,000 coins of brass, copper or bronze, with a value originally intended to correspond to a tael, but which, with the characteristic tendencies of exchange, may, at times, more nearly be equivalent to fifty cents.

The doom of the *cash*, however, was sounded early in the present century—what with the advance in the price of copper, especially



*The Shop of the Moneychanger.*





during the Great War, when the coins were industriously melted up for export; and with the increased cost of living, which has reduced their purchasing power to the vanishing point, and caused the degradation of the *cash* from its former status to that of a coin fit only to be flung to the beggar. In other words, the minting of *cash* coins having ceased, they are replaced by the one-copper pieces, with every prospect that even these are due shortly to meet with the scorn now inspired by the *cash*.

To establish himself as the guardian of an exchange shop, the moneychanger needs but the licensing of a native bank; and whatever may be his actual capital stock, his ultimate good fortune is to be assumed, as a foregone conclusion, from his point of view, from the fact that his first act is to affix to his "money-box" a large board—the gift of his well-wishers—bearing a single character, compounded of four or five. Their message, translated, reads: "May you have ten thousand ounces of yellow gold!"

As part and parcel of the currency system, which produces him in countless numbers, the moneychanger must be accorded a considerable place in the scheme of life in China. His progenitors, the native banks, would not, of course, display such emblems as ours. These power stations of domestic finance, whence issues the current that sets the wheels of exchange in motion, would employ the inscribed order of signboard, horizontally placed above the door, with vertical plates of polished brass at either side of the entrance—all planned with due regard for their status as arbiters of a nation's commercial destinies.

In the course of their development, these institutions have encountered, and are gradually overcoming the prejudice of the large majority of the Chinese people in favour of the old-time custom of cacheing their worldly wealth within the radius of their own supervision—frequently with dire results to them, but with great advantage to the looter. This tendency, however, being merely a part of the constitutional conservativeness of the people, does not reflect on the banking system, which foreign opinion has pronounced always to have been an excellent one. As a matter of fact, banking itself, together with the system of bank notes and cheques, is one of the numerous inventions of the Chinese.

But however efficient—and of recent years, rapidly developing—the Chinese system of banking may be, there seems as little prospect

as ever there has been, for the stabilization of the national currency; and the native banks continue to play about with the power that has retarded the growth of China's world trade. It is obvious, of course, that official support has supplied the motive power for the machinery of exchange; but the fundamentals of the system undoubtedly lie in that love of speculation that is so engrained in the Chinese character that one sees little children stopping at the stall of the travelling sweet-seller, and venturing their coins on a spin of the wheel, which is a part of his equipment. On the chance of doubling its value, a coin is staked; and no stoic ever faced the inevitable with greater impassivity than that with which the loss of the *cash* is accepted here. Hence, by the time the urchin is become a merchant, he is more than half composed of speculator, and would not willingly forego the stimulation which the fluctuations of exchange offer to his preternaturally sharpened wits.

But whatever the degree of his satisfaction with the "game," it is certain that the endless variations in the value of Chinese money are less amusing to the foreigner, whether he be resident, or traveller—unless, of course, he belong to that section of the business community, which, from necessity or choice, has managed to master, and extract both interest and profit from, the situation. In fact, a popular saying has it, that the exchange broker is the only person who achieves riches in China; and, as is usual with broad statements, no note is made as to what may be the total sum that has been "dropped," in the efforts of both amateurs and professionals to assimilate the intricacies of "exchange."

At any rate, at the moneychanger's, which one of our inscribed signboards designated as "The Prosperous Fountain," the merry whirl goes on, and the average mind surrenders without a fight; and ceases to conjecture as to why the dollar sometimes changes into six 20-cent pieces, plus 12 coppers, as it does at one moment, while perhaps in a month's time, it will yield a 20-cent piece less; or why, indeed, it buys more coins in one exchange shop than in the next, on the same day. As to this, there is no appeal. For, as to the conversion of dollars into "small money," the average shop may pay as little, or as much, as it likes, apparently. In the International Settlement of Shanghai, a municipal regulation requires that the exchange shop shall declare its intentions in this regard, in a sign printed

in English. This, however, is not a Chinese law or custom, and does not apply outside the Settlement, nor elsewhere in China. Hence, all that it behoves, or avails one to do, is to "take it, or leave it"—not forgetting on deciding in favour of the former, carefully to observe the formality of testing every coin by its "ring" as it strikes the counter.

In view of the irregularities that characterize the monies of China, it becomes one of the functions of the moneychanger to guarantee the coins which he passes out to the public and to the multitude of small "change-money" shops where no such formality is observed. The process consists in the stamping of the coin with an identifying mark, or "chop" in ink, and/or by means of a tiny impression produced with hammer and chisel. The latter method defaces the coin by the extraction of a minute particle of silver; and after the dollar has passed through a sufficient number of operations of this sort its value is materially affected. Thereafter it is no longer accepted by count, but only by weight—supposing that it circulates at all, which is the case only in certain parts of the south.

In the persistent, consistent, and chaos-inviting inconsistencies of her currency, China stands alone among the countries of the world; and in no other quarter of the globe are conditions to be found in the remotest degree comparable to those prevailing in the land of the Chinese to-day. The story of China's media of exchange presents itself as one of the most interesting phases of her history, indissolubly bound up with other characteristic aspects of her civilization, and richly imbued with the elements of romance. It is, however, a tale that, obviously, it is not within our province to relate; but the reader may not consider it too great a digression, perhaps, if we lightly touch upon such questions as the traveller is likely to have asked himself while passing through the country too hurriedly to seek their answers.

One of these would be, doubtless, as to: Why the Mexican dollar, at all—especially in view of the fact that he may have met in the not so distant past, many another, on his way from Hongkong, Amoy, or Canton, where the British Trade, or Hongkong dollar, from the Imperial Mints in Bombay and Calcutta, continues to circulate, while the Carolus, the other Spanish dollar, besides the Mexican, has passed from view. In addition to these, there are the dollars of the Chinese mints, *i.e.*, the Dragon, and, predominantly, the one bearing the head of Yuan Shih Kai, which latter one encounters more frequently



nowadays than any of the others.

On inquiring into the history of the Mexican dollar in China, we find that notwithstanding its established position as the medium of exchange in China's foreign trade, it was not the first of the Spanish dollars to reach the country.

"During the period of the Spanish domination," says Mr. Benjamin White, in his book entitled *Silver*, "an enormous quantity of coins, styled pieces of eight (pesos), or 'pillar' dollars (from the pillars of Hercules which adorn the reverse) were shipped abroad. In the sixteenth and following centuries, these coins were to be seen in every market of the world, not excepting the ports of the little-known Celestial Empire, from which Mexico is separated by wide tracts of ocean, the crossing of which presented in those days no little difficulty."

It was, however, from Manila, on the opening of trade between China and Spain, in 1575, that these pillar dollars trickled into the ports.

"Dollars, we know," says William F. Spalding, in his volume entitled *Eastern Exchange Currency and Finance*, "were introduced into China by the Spaniards from the Philippines. These were the old pillar dollars issued in the reigns of Charles III and Charles IV of Spain . . . . When trade was opened between India and China, (in 1757) the old East India Company found itself under the necessity of sending these dollars to China in payment for purchases of silk, tea, etc., so great had the popularity of the coin become. The fact that Canton was the only port open to foreign commerce for upward of a century from 1757, also favoured the introduction of the coin . . . . Then, during the Napoleonic Wars, about 75 per cent. of the foreign trade of China was paid for in dollars of the Carolus type."

Their reign lasted until 1854, when they were superseded by the Mexican dollar, in general favour. An American commission appointed in the Philippines established as the ratio of value, two dollars Mexican to one American gold; but following the Boxer uprising of 1900, the available supply of Mexican dollars, with which to pay the claims of the foreign nations soon became exhausted, with the result that their value rose considerably higher, and the outflux from Manila of these coins had its own effect on currency problems there. Later, of course, they depreciated again, in the inevitable fluctuations of exchange; but at one time, in 1919, owing to the high



price of silver an American gold dollar brought as little as 73 cents Mex. At the present time (1926), the Mexican dollars are rapidly disappearing, the coins being melted up and re-cast as Republican *guan* (Chinese word for *dollar*, though it actually signifies *round*). When the latter have altogether replaced both the Dragon and the foreign-minted dollars, we shall probably find the word *silver* used instead of the time-honoured three-letter suffix, *Mex*.

And thus does the long-standing desire on the part of the Chinese—*i.e.*, that the native coin should supersede the foreign—find fulfilment; and the Mexican dollar (in China) dies at last, at the hands of the Chinese, after the persistent efforts of the British, American and Japanese governments, to eliminate and substitute for it, dollars of their own coinage. It is a *dénouement* brought about, after all, by what might be called *external* pressure, since it was by the terms of the Mackay Treaty with Great Britain (1902) that China agreed (Article II) "to take the necessary steps to provide for a uniform universal coinage, which shall be legal tender in payment of all duties, taxes, and other obligations throughout the Empire, by British, as well as Chinese subjects."

The defeat of the earlier attempts of the Chinese to realize this ambition has been attributed in part to the fact that little silver has been mined in China; but the real reason is undoubtedly to be found in the following significant paragraph from *The Currencies of China*, a recent book by E. Kann, a Shanghai financier, whose study of the subject of Chinese currency covers a period of twenty-five years of personal contact with its vagaries in various parts of China.

"The Chinese government," says Mr. Kann, "does not deem it to be its duty to define and control the weights used within this country, and neither does it interfere as regards the fineness of bullion. All this is left to the local governing bodies, to Chambers of Commerce, and the like corporations."

These remarks are made with particular reference to the subject of taels, over which the public assaying office exercises a control; but they are equally applicable to the coinage of silver dollars, the earlier varieties of which failed to pass muster with the Chinese themselves, not necessarily because of a universal inferiority in the products of the native mints, but for reasons that will appear.

The first of the Chinese dollars was that called the Dragon Dollar,

from the design of the coiled dragon upon its face. It issued from the first mint, sanctioned by the Empress Dowager in 1888, and opened at Canton, though it was not until two years later that the dragons were brought forth. The first of these coins, both in weight and fineness, were not inferior to the Spanish dollars; but though they were intended to replace the latter as legal tender for the payment of official salaries, taxes, internal revenues and customs, their general purchasing power was below that of the foreign dollars for the reason that, directly they crossed the border of the province in which they were coined, they were subjected to a discount. Despite this fact, however, the provincial mints increased, one by one, as province after province claimed and exercised the privilege, until by 1905, twenty government mints were in operation in seventeen provinces.

But meanwhile, official sanction appeared to expend itself in the establishment of the mints, and the want of standardization of the coins persistently defeated their essential object. The inferiority of some varieties of the provincial dollars tended to affect the value of all, and, far from driving the Mexican dollar out of existence, caused it to be held at a premium.

In 1906, an Imperial Edict having commanded a reduction in the number of mints, the Board of Revenue instituted the merging of those of several of the provinces, reducing the total number to nine, and appointing that of Tientsin as the Central Mint of the Government. This, however, was looted and destroyed during the Revolution of 1911-1912; but, reorganized in 1914, and with a new plant built upon the same site, it is known to-day as Tientsin Central Mint. Notwithstanding the fact, however, that Article I of the Currency Laws enacted January 1, 1914, provides that "The right of minting and issuance of national currency shall belong solely to the Government," the presently existing provincial mints are controlled by the provincial governments, having long since become independent both of the Government, and of the Tientsin Central Mint. Several that had been merged with those of other provinces have been re-opened, their total present number being about thirty inclusive of a new mint for Kalgan, and another for Shanghai. A classification, however, has recently graded those of Tientsin and Shanghai as first, and the remainder as second class mints.

The following paragraph from the *Chinese Economic Bulletin*

(January, 1924) is in point:

"Provincial chiefs now look upon the mints in the provinces as sources of revenue. Handsome profits have been made by issuing debased subsidiary coins. Some of the provincial mints, finding it more profitable to issue subsidiary coins, have stopped casting dollar coins, and have devoted themselves entirely to the turning out of twenty-cent pieces and copper coins. The market being flooded with such debased coins, the public has to accept them at a discount."

Small wonder, then, at the sort of situation which arose in Shanghai, recently, when the market was flooded with spurious twenty-cent pieces, which proved to have been coined by one of the mints controlled by the military authority of Fukien province. His troops having been deprived of their rightful pay by the chronic attitude of the Chinese toward their educators and soldiers, he had sought to meet their needs in the only way apparently open to him.

Among the coins which the traveller was wont to encounter on his way through China, besides those already mentioned, are the Peruvian, Bolivian, Chilean, and American Trade dollars, the French piastre, the Japanese silver yen, and the Indian rupee; but the fact that these are rapidly giving way before the Republican dollar will be evident from the following brief summary of the comprehensive data on this subject comprised in *The Currencies of China*, which will aid the reader in identifying such of these fast-disappearing coins as may come under his notice.

*The Mexican dollar*, which replaced the Carolus, or pillar dollar in China, and which enjoys the distinction of having been at one time the most widely circulated coin known to history, bears on its reverse side the Mexican national emblem—an eagle, with spreading wings, and holding a snake in its beak; above it is the legend, "REPUBLICA MEXICANA." On its face is inscribed the word "LIBERTAD," with the cap of Liberty, from which radiate the rays of the sun.

Though known to fame as the Mexican *dollar*, neither this nor the other Spanish dollars were called other than "peso" in their own country. It was first minted in Mexico in 1824, three years after the establishment of the Republic, superseding the coins that had been issuing from the Spanish government mints there, since A.D. 1537. It circulated "not only in the two American continents, in the West Indies, in the islands of the Pacific and in Japan, but throughout the



greater portion of Asia from the arctic Siberian shores down to the tropics," says Mr. Kann. And the explanation of its popularity in China was the simple one of fineness and uniformity throughout the six decades of its greatest fame there. First introduced in 1854, it gradually displaced its predecessors, but its cycle has evidently been completed; and it is only a question of time before it will have disappeared completely—to reappear with the head of Yuan Shih Kai, and the imprint of the Republic of China.

The name *guan* was given to a dollar coined in the last days of the Ching dynasty, in 1910, when under the prevailing dissatisfaction with the irregularities of the dragon dollar, the Ministry of Finance issued new regulations governing the production of a Chinese standard dollar. These efforts were naturally submerged under those of the Republic, and the Yuan Shih Kai dollar, produced by the government mints in Tientsin, Nanking, Wuchang and Canton, having overcome the interprovincial difficulties that beset the path of the older coinages, circulates throughout China without any diminution in its value.

*The Bolivian, Chilean, and Peruvian Dollars*, made from the silver mined in those countries during the Middle Ages, and brought into China by Spanish traders, along with the Carolus dollars, lost favour with the public by reason of the alloy in excess of legally fixed quantities entering into their manufacture in the seventeenth century; and when found in China nowadays, they are, according to Mr. Kann, "to be regarded as a curiosity, and not as a medium of circulation."

*The British Dollar* bears upon its face the figure of Britannia, standing upon a rock rising out of the sea. In her right hand she carries a trident, and her left rests upon a shield. On the reverse side the value of the coin is inscribed in Chinese and Malayan characters, the coin having been intended for circulation in the Straits Settlements, as well as Hongkong.

The effort of the Colonial Government to replace the Mexican dollar with a currency of its own lasted about two years (1866–1868), when the machinery was sold to the Japanese Government. Later it was decided to employ the Imperial Mints at Bombay and Calcutta for the same purpose, and since 1895 these dollars have issued thence. In 1906 the adoption of the gold exchange standard system in the Straits Settlements, dislodged the British dollar in the Crown colony and Malay. But meantime, the product of the Indian mints gained

steadily in popularity in China, and became a serious rival to the Mexican dollar. Though it never gained circulation in Shanghai, it was, from 1909-1912, the favourite currency of North China.

*The American Trade Dollar*, obversely inscribed with the words "TRADE DOLLAR" and "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA," was coined between the years 1873 and 1887, especially for circulation in the Far East. At this time the Mexican Government's dollar ruled supreme and commanded a premium in foreign markets, in spite of an eight per cent. tax on its export. But though the American trade dollar enjoyed a considerable prestige in China, the experiment proved an undesirable one. Prevailing exchange rates had brought the first issue up to a value of \$1.04, but the trade dollars found their way back to America, where they had been expressly intended not to be legal tender; and when, four years after their issue, a serious decline in the price of white metal caused a depreciation in their value, they were worth less than the gold dollar, and less than the depreciated bank notes. Thus they were withdrawn, and such as did not find their way back to America "ended in the melting pot of the Orient."

*The French Piastre, or Saigon Dollar*, emanating from Indo-China, which became a French colony in 1862, was first issued in 1885. It was the equivalent of the American Trade dollar in weight, fineness and uniformity, but superior to the Mexican, for which reason the piastres were either hoarded or melted up. Wherefore, to remove this temptation, a new piastre was struck in 1895, which is now circulating in Indo-China—whence the Mexican dollar has vanished—and in the Chinese province of Yunnan.

*The Japanese Silver Yen* is the coin produced with the minting equipment purchased from the Colonial Government at Hongkong, in 1868. Its function was to be the elimination of the Mexican dollar in Japan; but the first issue was inferior to the Mexican, and it was decided to raise the quality to correspond to that of the American Trade dollar. Little success attended the efforts; but later, as a result of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) the silver yen gained a foothold in Manchuria; and while it has disappeared from China, it is now the basis of the currency of South Manchuria, though circulating there in the shape of bank notes only.

The Yuan Shih Kai dollar has not, of course, reached its present position of pre-eminence over all of these coins without having en-



countered the inevitable attempts at adulteration incidental to coinage in China. These are, however, much more promptly and effectively dealt with to-day than was the case with the first Chinese dollars. The Yuan Shih Kai dollar made its first appearance towards the end of 1914, as a result of the new National Currency Regulations which went into effect in February of that year. It issued first of all from the Tientsin and Nanking Mints, but is now being turned out also by the mints at Wuchang and Canton.

It was found necessary to reduce slightly the degree of fineness promulgated in the Regulations, to meet the lower standards of the dollars that were being melted up and reissued as the Yuan Shih Kai. As time goes on, this melting and re-coinage feature of dollar coinage gradually will be eliminated; and the coins, in greater and greater numbers will be produced direct from bar silver, or, in the absence of sufficient quantities of this, from sycee. As the cost of production, in the latter case, is greater than in the former, it is resorted to only under necessity.

The first design for the new dollar was that of a foreign engraver connected with the Tientsin Mint. It was not adopted, however, and the "Number One" Republican dollar, as it stands, is that which bears on its face the head of Yuan Shi Kai, and the Chinese characters indicating the "Year of the Republic" in which it has been coined. On its reverse a garland of grain surrounds the characters signifying "One Dollar."

Other varieties of Republican dollars that are slowly being superseded by the Yuan Shih Kai include several bearing the head of Sun Yat Sen; two with the head of Li Yuan Hung; a dollar inscribed as issued by the "MILITARY GOVERNMENT OF SZECHUAN"; and a limited issue (1925) of a special dollar commemorating the "Fourteenth Anniversary of the Foundation of the Chinese Republic."

However, insofar as these matters affect the traveller in China, he has only to set forth on his journeys with his moneys in the form of Republican dollars, which are of uniform value all over China and Mongolia; and he may always insist upon being given these in exchange for bank notes, which lose in value directly they leave the port of issue. The inconvenience of transport is entirely negligible, as it adds little to the already considerable impedimenta with which one travels in China—to the great joy of the ubiquitous coolie.



SIDE VIEW OF A SHOE OF SHANGHAI SYCEE.

*Value about 50 taels. Nearly actual Size.*



TOP VIEW OF A SHOE OF SHANGHAI SYCEE.  
*Value about 50 taels. Showing the Kung Ku's ink inscriptions.  
Nearly actual Size.*

## Chapter Eight:

### *The Elusive Tael, and the "Loofang."*



WE have, however, still to consider another important phase of the money question of China, which Sign No. 71 presents to view, and by so doing automatically introduces itself as easily the most significant of all our emblems. In this group of lozenges, yellow, blue, and yellow, suspended above an object that purports to represent the peculiarly characteristic silver "shoe" of China, we have the device of the *Loofang*, the shop in which silver bullion is converted into taels. The fact that this mysterious unit of calculation and basis of accountancy in China, has thus far resisted all efforts to bring it into tangible being as a coin, is too well known to require reiteration here; but an equally surprising circumstance, that may or may not be a matter of common knowledge, is the fact that the ingots, which are the actual taels of commerce, are produced by private enterprise.

It follows naturally, therefore, that the *Loofang* represents the most important of all industries in China; and by reminding ourselves



of the elaborate machinery of industrial organization operated by the guilds, we are enabled to form some conception of the influence wielded by the heads of such enterprises as the *Loofang*. The effect, on the scheme of Chinese life generally, of the power vested in such guilds as these, is graphically indicated in a recent article by Frederick Cunliffe-Owen, C.B.E., published in the *New York Times*, wherein the subject of the guilds is touched upon in connection with other aspects of China.

"Perhaps the most potent of these guilds," says this writer, "is the one that controls the entire specie and bullion trade of China, and which has been known to sway the money markets and the gold resources of the United States, of Great Britain, and of Continental Europe at various times, notably in the early stages of the Great War, when the movement of bullion was a matter of so much difficulty and delicacy.

"As a general rule, these great guilds work independently of one another; but on the rare occasions when they cooperate, their force is well-nigh irresistible. And in this connection it is worthy of note, that none of the great provincial Tuchuns, or more or less independent Governors, no matter how strong, not even the Manchu Emperors and Empresses in the days of their most despotic sway and tyranny, have ever sought to control and dominate these guilds, either individually or collectively. They know by experience that the guild has the means of completely paralyzing almost overnight any particular trade and industry with which it is concerned, and of thus arresting the economic machinery of the nation."

A truer and more life-like picture of the real China than is suggested in these broad lines, it would be difficult to find. On one side of the coin, as it were, are the emblems bespeaking the despotic power of its rulers, great and small; and on the reverse, the signs of the definite and distinct limitations beyond which the submissiveness of their subjects must not be put to the test. And thus the power of the people lives on, while dynasties perish, and successive republican governments crumble. And, meanwhile the *Loofang* maintains its pre-eminent position in Chinese industry; the tael its place on the books of the Sino-foreign commercial world; and the guild retains its more than imperial sway over the economic destinies of the nation.



The *Loofang*, needless to say, has not had its initial inception in actual appointment by the government; but, nevertheless, its operations are subject to official control, this power being exercised by the public assaying office—the *Kung Ku Chü*. Hence, recognition by the *Kung Ku*, of certain long-established industries of this nature is a sufficient guarantee of the firms' status. The actual business of ingot-moulding, however, is usually farmed out to a succession of small shops, which are identified by our emblem, No. 71.

The interior of such a shop is crude and bare enough, considering the importance of the work being done there. Furthermore, it is an interior which few Chinese have ever glimpsed, save those actually engaged in the industry. The "shoes" are cast in varying sizes, from a half-ounce to fifty (the "tael" of commerce); and these ingots are set about on ledges, or on any available spot on the small stoves, or rude benches occupying haphazard positions here and there. They are first stamped with the name, location, and number of the shop; and after the *Kung Ku* has tested them for quality (with the aid of the touchstone) he marks the result of his examination upon their surface in ink.

It will be remembered, perhaps, that in our list of inscribed signboards mentioned in an earlier chapter, there appeared one typical of the bullion assayer. Its characters represented him to be possessed of "Great Virtue"; and that this claim is not to be taken as a mere example of flowery language is evident from the following authoritative statement found in *The Currencies of China*.

"In spite of the very primitive manner of assaying," says the author, "it must be emphasized that the results, upon examination within the country and abroad, have invariably shown the honesty of the assayer, as well as the correctness of his judgment."

The name by which this much-discussed, and ever baffling object, the "tael" is known, is said to be derived possibly from the Indian word *tola*, though in the sense of value the two do not correspond. The tael is both a weight—*i.e.*, the Chinese ounce, irrespective, naturally, of whether it be of silver, gold, or cotton wool—and a unit of currency; but the word is not used by the Chinese, and most of the prevailing confusion of mind that surrounds it arises from the fact that the foreigner seeks to render the two meanings in a single term. When the Chinese refers to an ounce of silver—or the money tael, in

other words—he uses the expression *liang-yin* (sometimes adding the affix belonging to nouns, *tze*). Otherwise the ounce is simply a *liang*—*yin* being the word for silver.

As to the weight and fineness of the hundreds of varieties of Chinese taels, and their relative equivalents in Troy weight, much has been said and written, but the subject is far too complicated and involved with local conditions to admit of any but the carefully detailed treatment it has received in the volumes specially devoted to finance.

"Taels current in various parts of China," says Mr. Kann, "differ considerably from each other, not only with regard to weight, but also in respect to the standard of fineness. Local taels of certain denomination represent a *quasi* standard of weight. But the fineness of the silver is not uniform on account of the primitive methods of smelting, and also owing to different institutions manufacturing sycee without regard to standardized methods . . . . If silver of a fineness of at least 0.935 is cast into ingots of varying weights, such money taels will be called collectively 'sycee'".<sup>23</sup>

The word "sycee" signifies "fine silk," the application of which term to the silver ingot is thus explained in Giles's *Glossary of Reference*, wherein the sycee is stated to have originated in the five northern provinces, Chihli, Shantung, Shansi, Shensi and Honan:

The Shansi bankers melt silver into ingots, and "after it has solidified, the mould is lightly tapped, when there appear, on the surface of the silver, fine silk-like circular lines. The higher the 'touch' of the metal, the more like a fine silk are these 'circlings' on the surface of the silver. Hence, ingots of full quality are classified as 'sycee'".

The history of the efforts at converting myth into reality by the production of a tael coin is not less interesting than the story of the dollar that was to oust the Mexican; but, in the case of the tael, these attempts were exclusively Chinese, with the single exception of the Hongkong Colonial Government's shortlived venture, in 1867. Its object was the creation of a Shanghai tael, this unit having been adopted for accountancy in Shanghai in 1856, after the Carolus dollar had been rendered no longer practicable owing to the fictitious value given it by a shortage of the coins. By reason of a practical correspondence in normal value of the Carolus dollar and the Shanghai tael, the transfer was made on the books by the mere exchange of terms. But the Shanghai "sycee" tael has still to make its material appearance

as a coin—as, indeed, have all the other taels of China.

From *The Currencies of China*, one gathers that the first of the efforts along these lines took place under the Southern Sung, in A.D. 1183, the coins having circulated for three years only. Nothing further seems to have occurred until the beginning of the nineteenth century, when, according to S. Wells Williams in *The Middle Kingdom* a tael coin was produced in Fukien province. It weighed 7 mace, 2 candareens (the table for tael weights is: 10 cash=1 candareen; 10 candareens=1 mace; 10 mace=1 tael) and bore the image of the "God of Longevity," its weight and the name of *Tao Kuang*. After this came the attempt at Hongkong; and in the latter part of the nineteenth century, in the reign of Kuang Hsü, was coined the only tael that is in actual present existence. Its circulation, however, is confined to Chinese Turkestan. In 1905 a decree of the Imperial Government (of China) commanded that the K'u-p'ing tael, which was the basis of accounting for internal revenue—as the Haikuan tael functions as regards the Customs—be taken as the unit of a new currency. The experiment, however, was abandoned.

At this time, too, and for a period of ten years (1905–1915) a peculiar type of tael circulated in the province of Hunan. It consisted of a flat lump of silver, stamped with its weight and the name of a bank. This represented a local custom among the banks of Changsha, which institutions delivered such bits of metal to the provincial mint, to be stamped, and then caused them to circulate as tael coins. The last of the efforts at the production of the tael coin was made by the Tientsin Mint in the latter part of the Ching dynasty, but this ended, shortly, as had all the preceding attempts. Thus, in China Proper, the tael coin has still to be given visible form: yet this fact does not in the least affect the status of the silver ingot, which having withstood every test of time and reliability, pursues the even tenor of its way, regardless of what may be happening in the world of dollars.

The popular name, "shoe," also applied to the tael, or sycee, originates from a custom of the Mongols, who were given to secreting lumps of silver in the crevices of their horses' hoofs. Soon after their conquest of China, however, the Mongol invaders revived the old Sung dynasty custom, and began the casting of their vast stores of silver from Arabia and Europe into ingots whose rudimentary likeness to the hoof of a horse suggested the name of "shoe." The Chinese

promptly followed suit, realizing that worldly wealth, in this form, was both easily estimated on account of its comparative purity, and readily stored on the possessor's premises. Later, the system made its practical appeal to foreign firms as the most reliable basis for accounting, and for interprovincial transport.

Vast quantities of "shoes" are said to be hoarded in the "model" province of Shansi, where, by the way, the banking system—and the exchange shop—originated. It will be remembered that a certain section of the territory now marked out on the maps as Shensi, Shansi and Honan is to be regarded as the cradle of the race known as the Chinese—born elsewhere, in northwest Asia, perhaps. It was included in the great state of Ch'in (whence, possibly, the name given to the people) into which the early settlement expanded in the Feudal Period, when the seat of the central government was established at P'ing Yang (modern Shansi). With the gradual organization of trades under the guild system, Shansi became the bankers' stronghold.



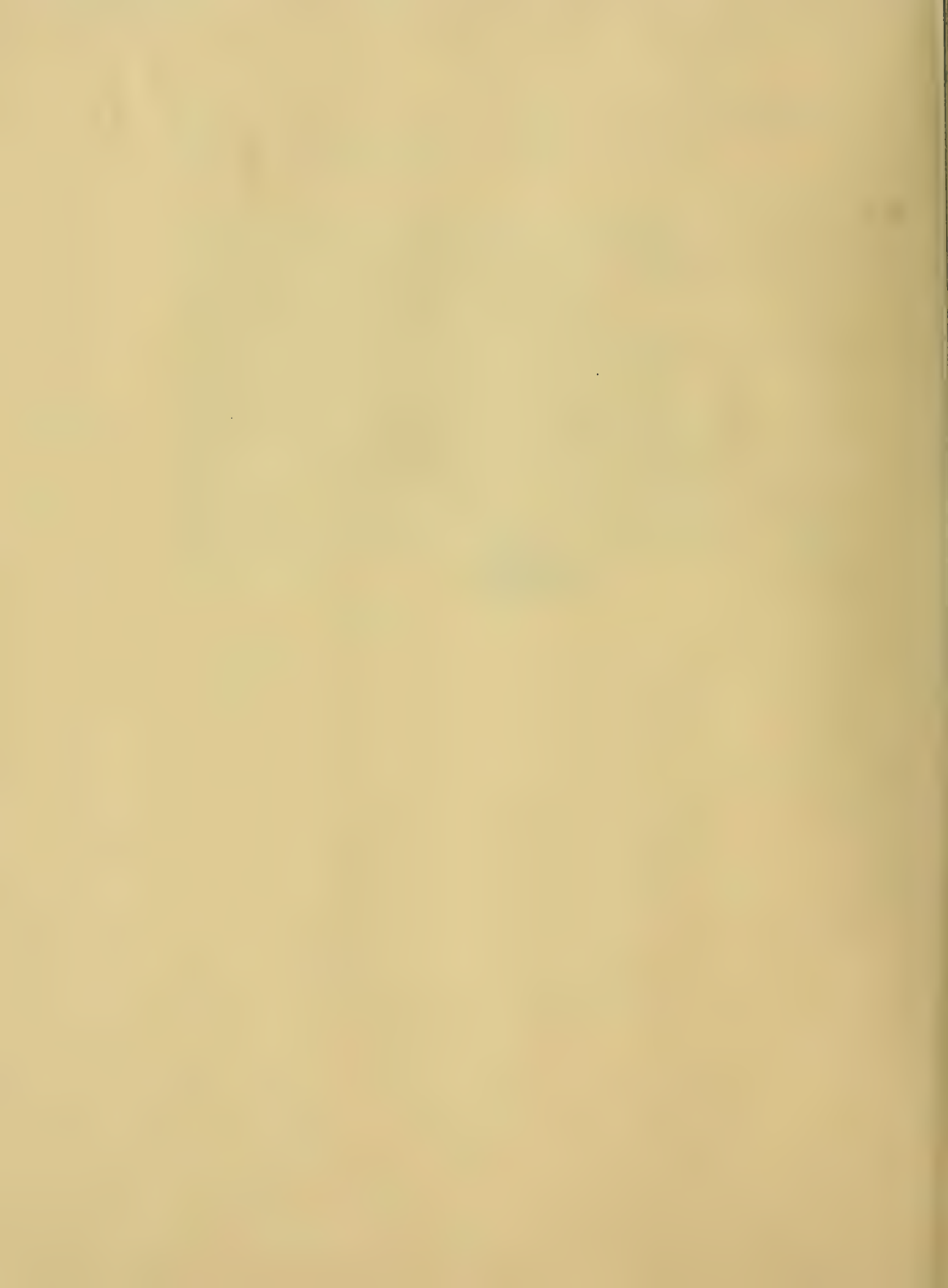
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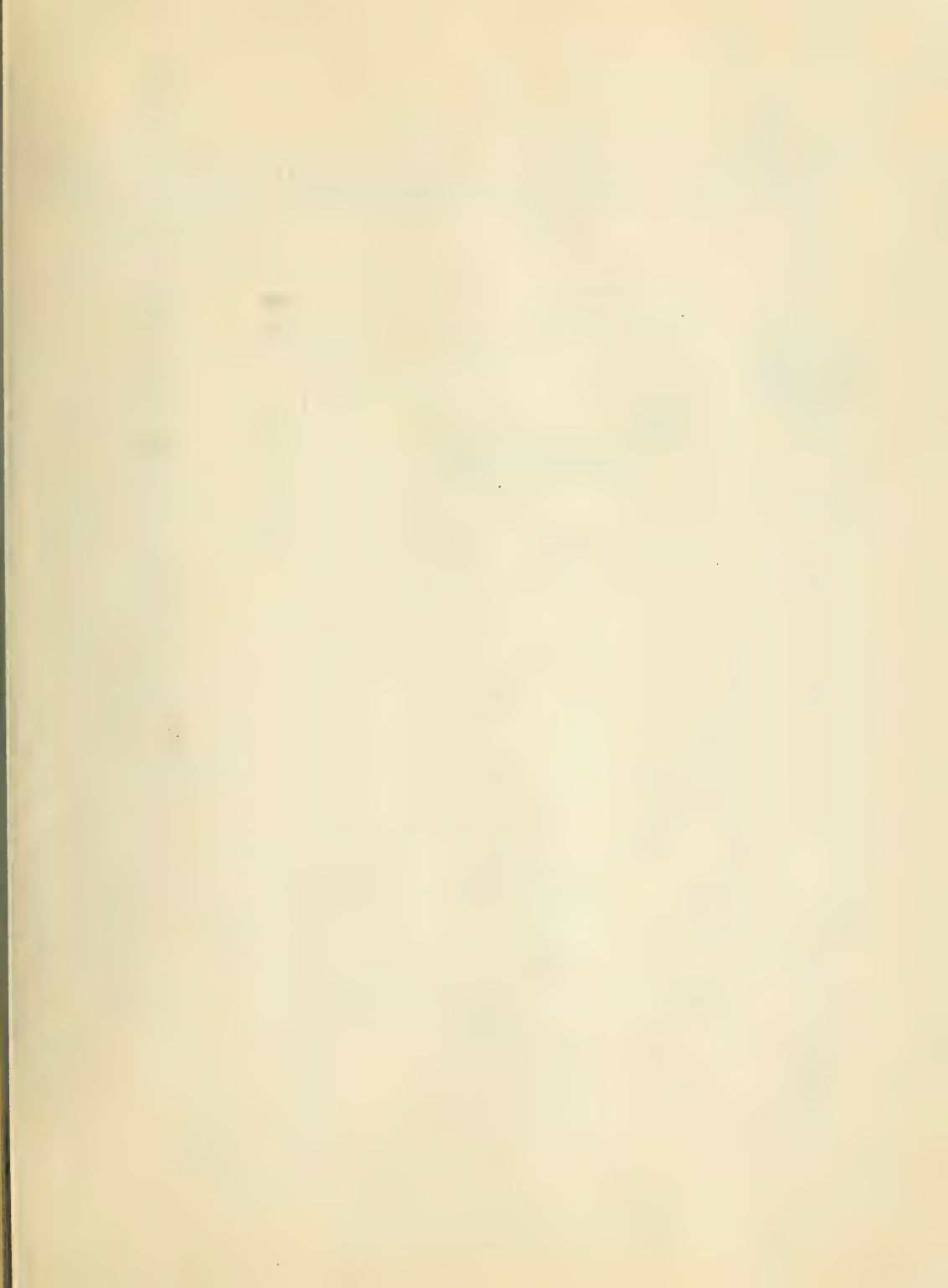
HIS GENERAL NEEDS

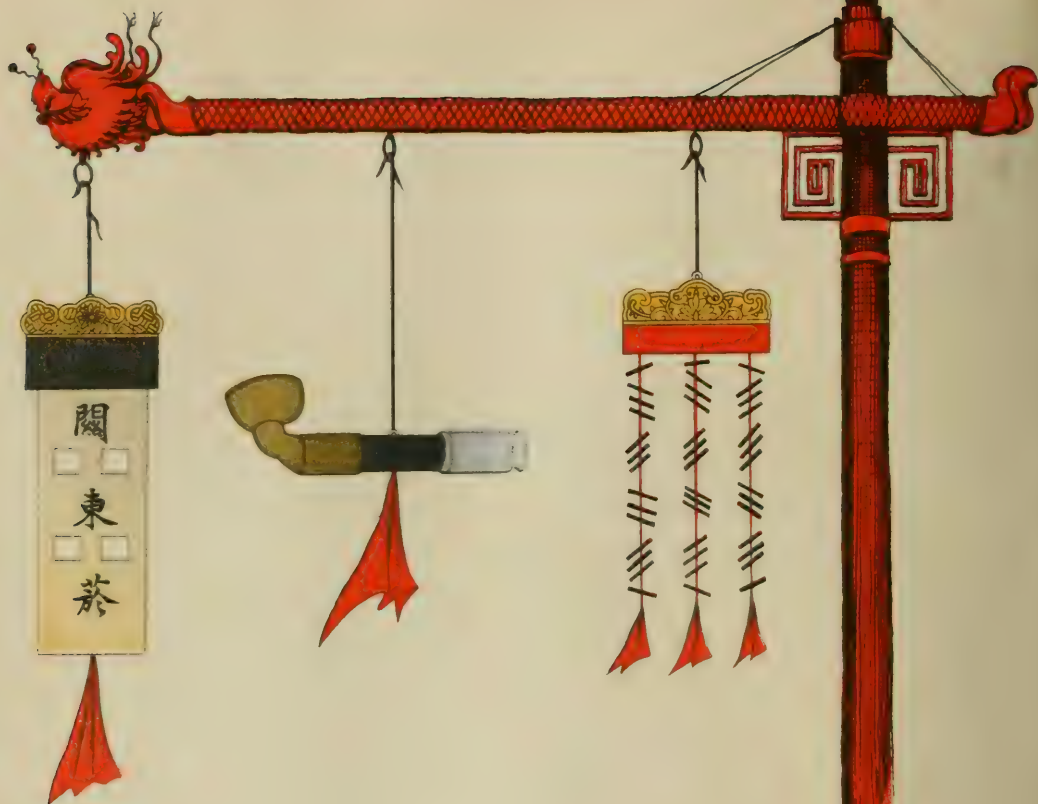
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No. 73.  
The Tobacconist.

煙  
鋪  
幌  
子

No. 74.  
The Pipe Shop.

烟  
袋  
鋪  
幌  
子

No. 75.  
Pipe Parts.

煙  
袋  
桿  
幌  
子

## Chapter Nine:

### *Miscellaneous Shops.*



HAVING, as it were, fed, bathed and clothed a sort of composite type of Chinese, and subsequently observed him at his labours, the next point to be considered would seem to be the field over which he scatters the coins of brass, copper or silver, as the case may be, which his toil has yielded him. Serious reflection suggests that his first consideration probably would be his pipe, without which item of his accoutrement, whether it be actively contributing to his comfort, or passively figuring as an accessory to his costume, it is impossible to visualize the old-school type of Chinaman. Though the inevitable tin of cigarettes—preferably, but not necessarily, of native manufacture—invariably accompanies the bowls of tea proffered to his guests, he will be found drawing his own solace from a long, straight-stemmed implement, with removable mouthpiece of brass, agate, jade—or whatever he may be able to afford—and a bowl the size of a thimble, however long the stem. It should, perhaps, be mentioned in passing, that unlike Bacchus, My

Lady Nicotine shows no noticeable disposition to relinquish her hold over her subjects in China.

#### THE TOBACCONIST.

Our composite guide, it must be understood, unites both the feminine and masculine elements, especially as regards the taste for tobacco; and therefore Sign No. 73 auspiciously introduces the subject.

This black, white, red and yellow device is that of the tobacconist, whose patron saint is the "God of the Hempen Sack," instead of Kuan Ti, "God of War," usually invoked by the tradesman; and if the reader like, he may fancy this barefooted figure, with back bent, stout staff in hand, and his sack slung across one shoulder, as he is pictured on the scroll that hangs in a place of honour in the shop, with incense sticks and candles on a table in front of it.

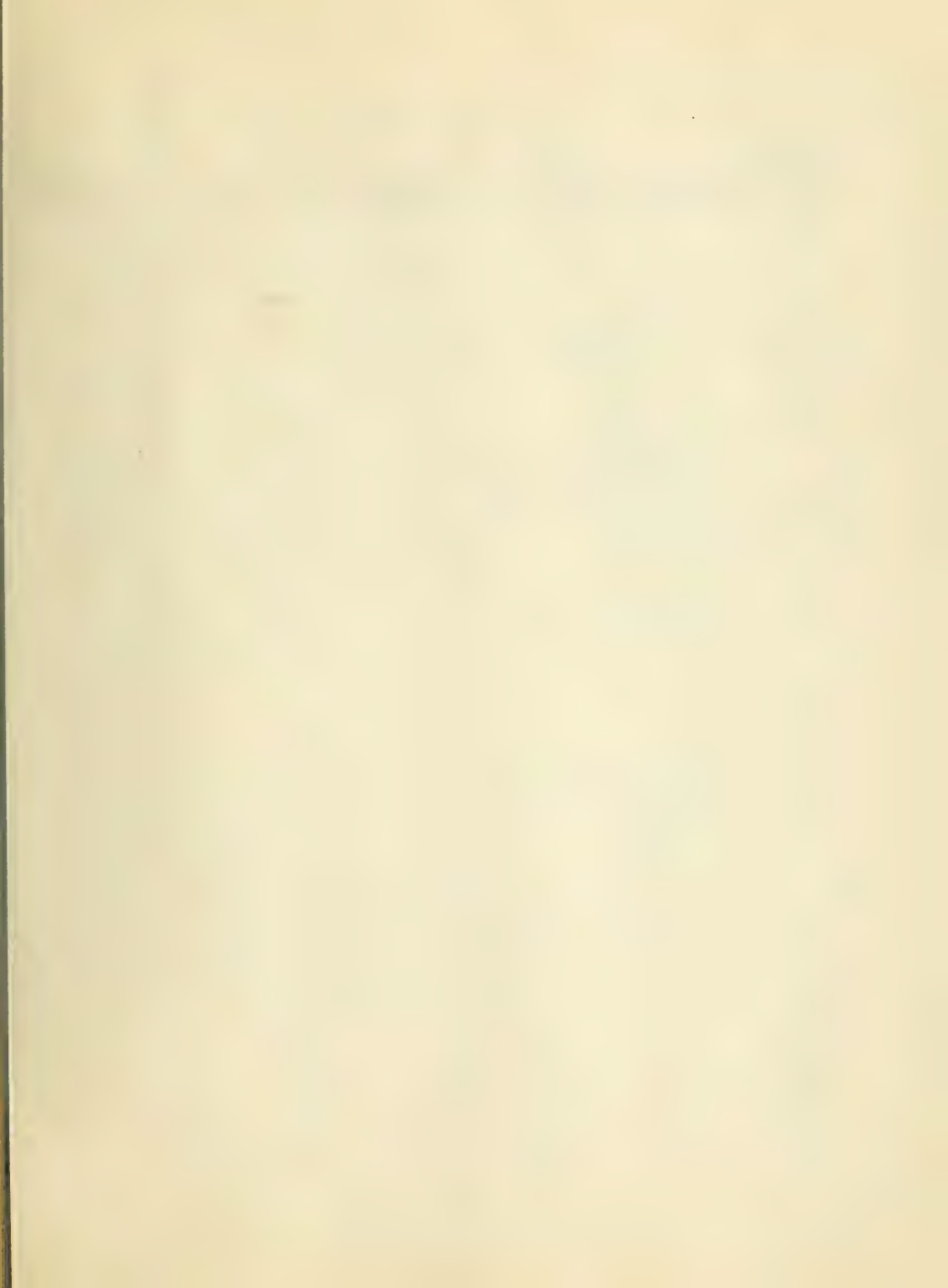
The characters on the sign announce that the stock is of the leaf recognized as the choicest, and coming from Kuantung, in the northern province of Fengtien. Both cigarettes—favoured by the Chinese woman—and tobacco, are included in the one word *yen*, and this fact does not aid the foreigner with a limited knowledge of the language, in making known his wants.

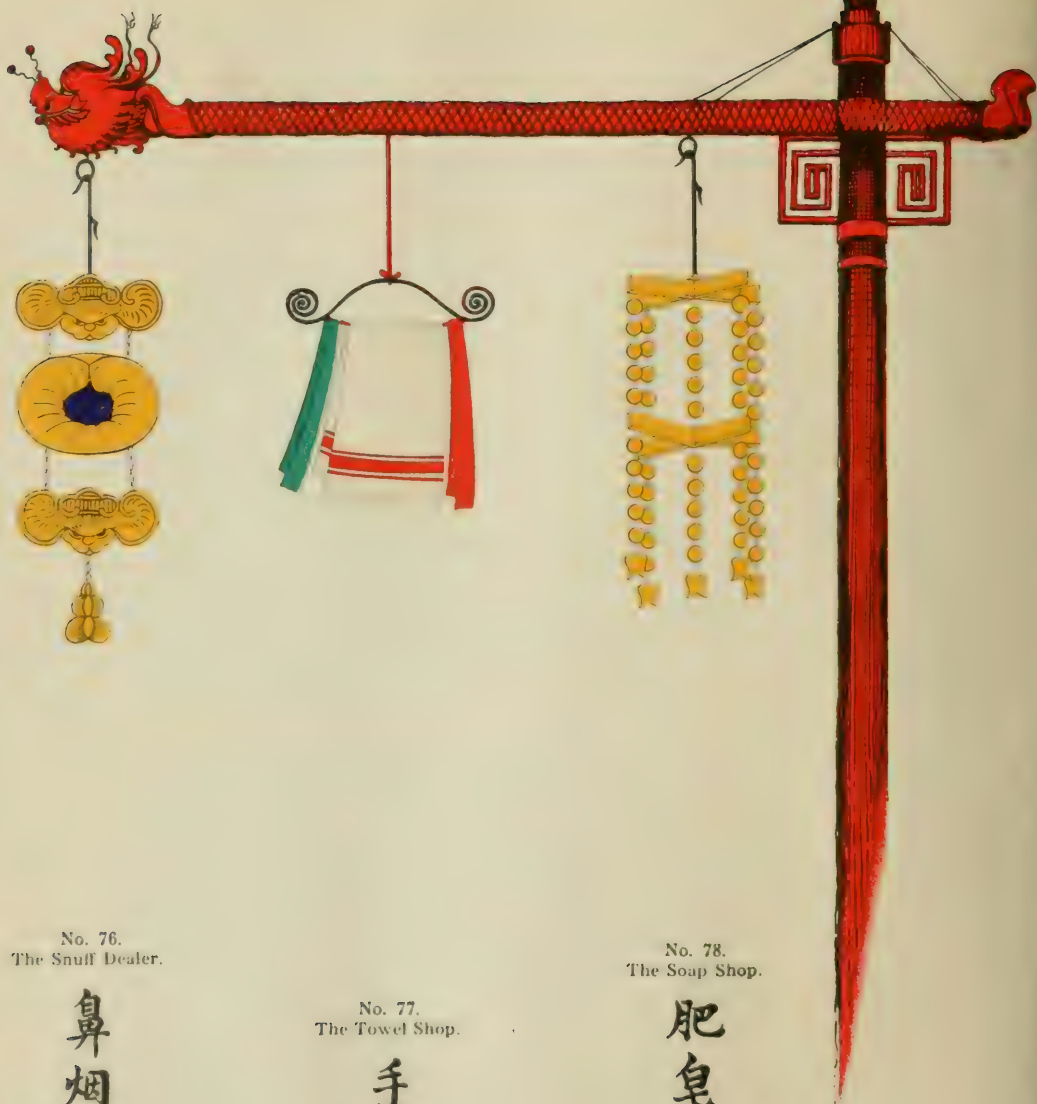
#### THE PIPE SHOP.

The pipe used as the shop sign, No. 74, is cast in a size that would suit the giants one meets in Chinese stories, and is not the model most often seen. This latter runs from one to five feet and more in length, and in its extremest manifestation is oftenest seen in the hands of the riverman, perhaps because the deck of a barge offers it rather better than average accommodation. The shorter variety travels the country roads, and when not in action has its nose thrust into the bag that feeds it. Mouthpieces and bowls are practically of uniform size, it being the stem that gives it length. This is usually made of bamboo, and when it needs to be changed, from time to time, it is at the shop where Sign No. 75 hangs, that these parts are procured—as the shop-keeper has indicated by attaching them crosswise, in groups of three, to a like number of lengths of red cord.

But the pipe that would be most conspicuous in the shop displaying No. 74 would be that intriguing plaything, the Chinese water-







No. 76.  
The Snuff Dealer.

鼻烟鋪幌子

No. 77.  
The Towel Shop.

手巾幌子

No. 78.  
The Soap Shop.

肥皂鋪幌子

pipe, made entirely of metal—white or yellow brass, silver, or cloisonné—with a curved stem about a foot and a half in length, rising from an oval-shaped body about three inches long, and a little less in height. Inside this is the receptacle for water. The “bowl” of the pipe is a tube, set in, just in front of the stem, to the height of an inch. Into the top of this fits a removable tube into which a few grains of tobacco are fed with a pair of tweezers. These are then lighted, and having yielded one puff to the smoker, the process of cleaning and refilling is repeated.

This latter operation is frequently performed by a servant, and when one has the good fortune to share a compartment on a railway train with a party of Chinese ladies engaged in this interesting pastime, the experience is one worth remembering. While one’s attention wanders from the pipe to the graceful movements of the hands that have just received it, there comes a gurgle, a flare of light, a puff of smoke. Then begins again the passing to and fro, the while one seeks for the explanation of the whole proceeding from among the salient characteristics of the race. Is it the combination of patience, economy, and the unreflecting acceptance of the accustomed, that accounts for the popularity of this pastime, or is it that the whimsicality of it appeals to the spirit of playfulness, which is also distinctly a Chinese trait, particularly among the women?

#### THE SNUFF DEALER.

Sign No. 76 belongs also to the realm of the enticing weed, this being the device of the dealer in snuff. Whether the upper and lower sections are intended to represent the head of the tiger—as the colour would suggest—or that of a horned animal, it would be difficult to say. Probably the former was the artist’s intention, the horns being added in consonance with artistic custom in China, where sculptured animals must not too closely resemble their living counterparts, as this would offend the spirits of the beasts. Despite which, nothing untoward appears to be involved in their faithful delineation in paintings. At any rate, the thought that rises at the aspect of the symbol is that the snuff-dealer would have done better to have reproduced any one of the beautiful bottles with the tiny spoon attached to the stopper, which are so coveted by the foreign collector.

## THE TOWEL SHOP.

Sign No. 77, obviously, is that of the towel shop.

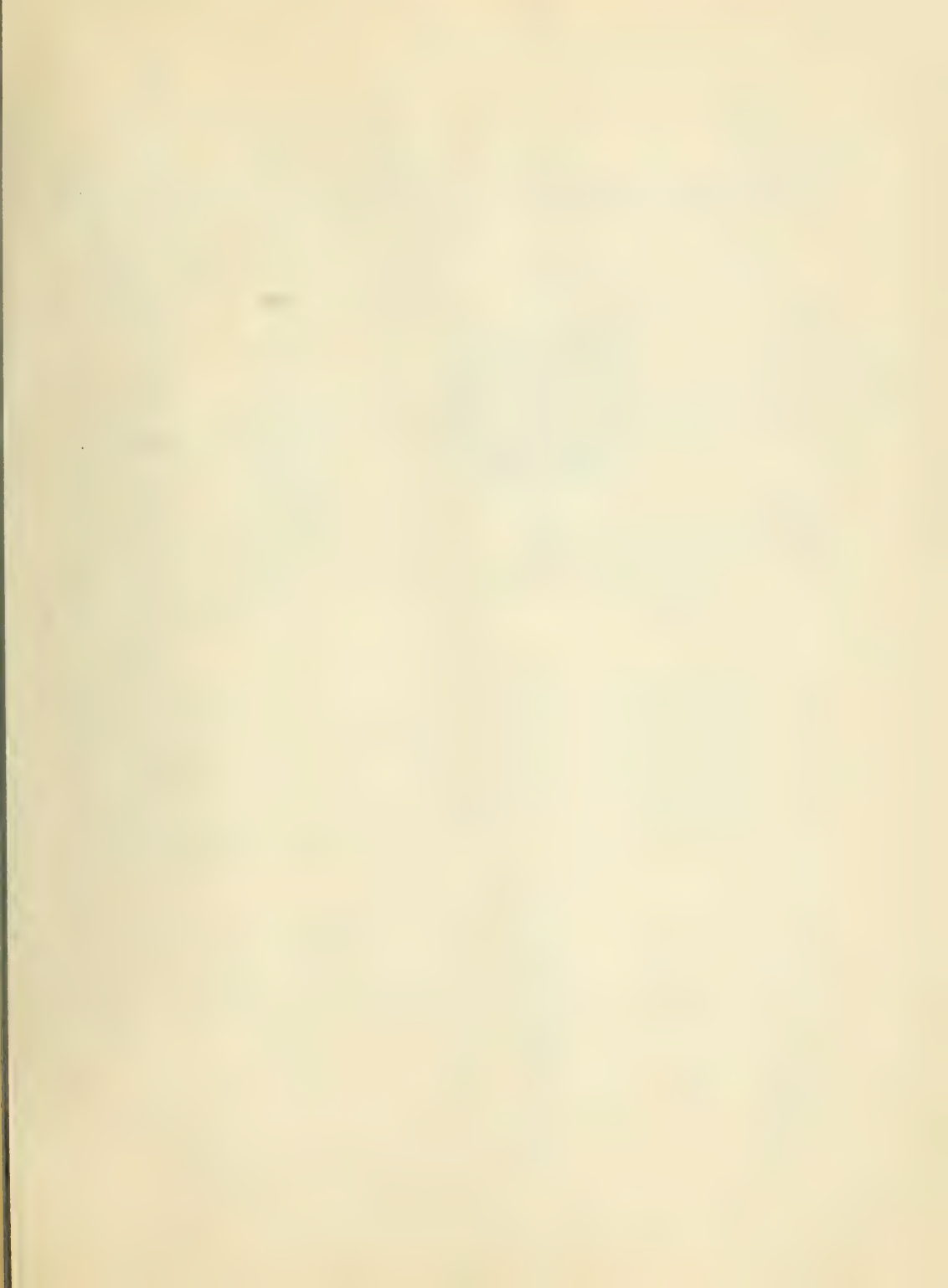
## THE SOAP DEALER.

Adjoining the sign of the dealer in towels is the appropriate but slightly more intriguing symbol of the soap merchant, No. 78. Doubtless the little balls strung together and suspended from the crosspieces, are intended to represent that commodity.

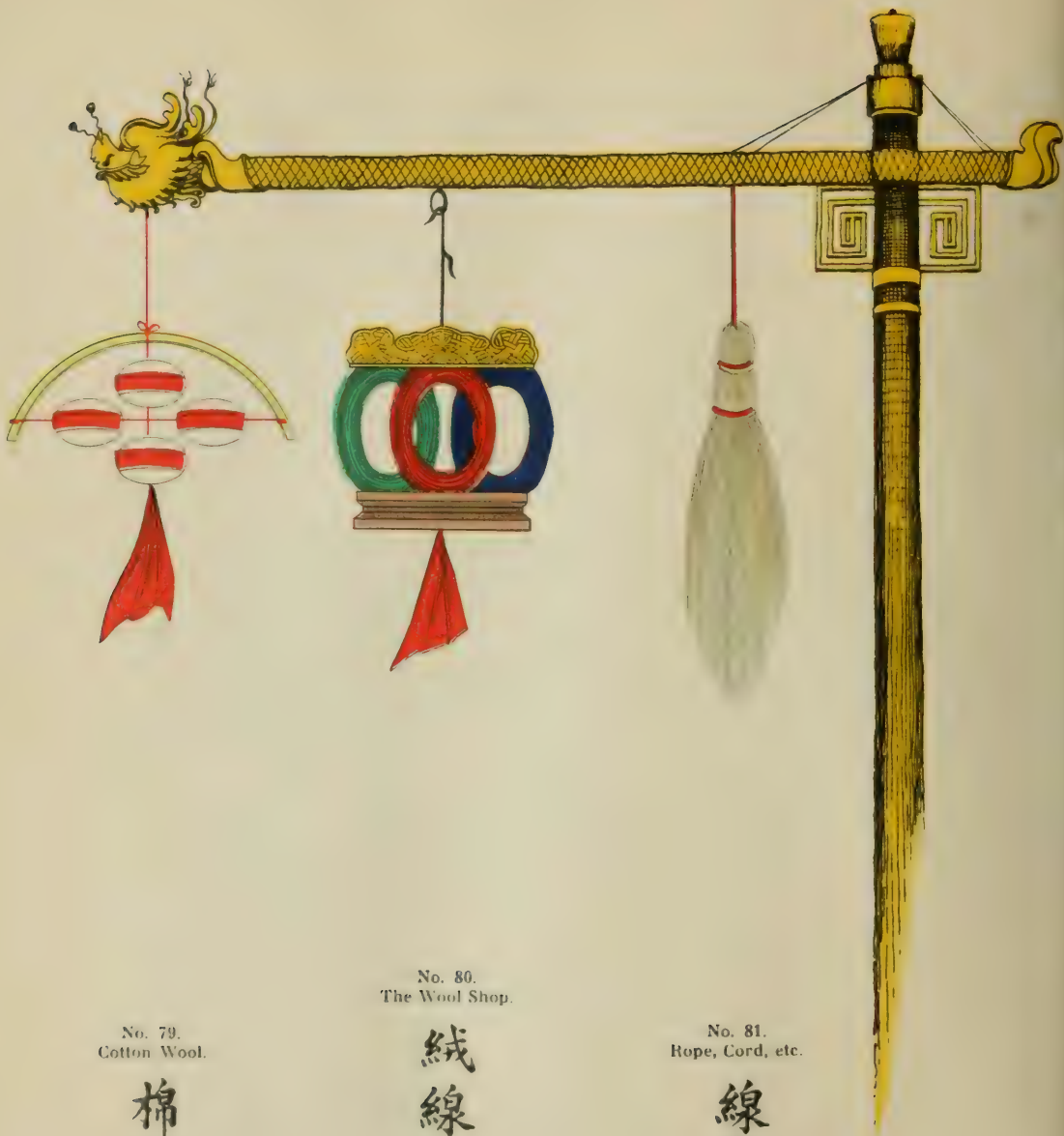
## COTTON WOOL.

In No. 79 the red-banded objects are meant for balls of cotton wool, a product as important to the Chinese as the air he breathes. Doubtless, he would cavil at this degree of comparison, and, not being given to physiological reflections, he would wish to change it to the superlative, seeing that it furnishes him his bed and his coverlet, and in cold weather attends him closer than a brother, determining the inflation of his silhouette, according to the number of layers interposed between the form that nature gave unto him, and the elements with which she has surrounded him.

The workshop, where it is spread out on a dais, and flayed into a lightness rivalling the snowflake that falls in the latitudes of dry cold, is one of the most familiar sights of a Chinese city, on the approach of, and during the cold season—as the spang of the taut string that produces the fluffiness is one of the most familiar sounds. The primitiveness of the process is a never-ending source of wonder to the twentieth-century mind, as are the cheerfulness and uncomplaining industry of the workers, seen as through a cloud formed of dust and fine particles of the cotton, that give a furry look to the bodies, and render the air only slightly less dense than the white mass on the dais. But for the fact that the front of the narrow shop is open to the outdoors, during the day, asphyxiation would be only a question of time. However, under the merry twanging of the string, the cumuli rise higher and higher as one watches; and one falls to comparing the faces seen through the mist with those of the pictured cherubim who lean leisurely elbows on similar white masses, far away from







No. 79.  
Cotton Wool.

棉花幌子

No. 80.  
The Wool Shop.

絨線鋪幌子

No. 81.  
Rope, Cord, etc.

線麻幌子

such scenes of toil. To them the twanging of strings is but incidental to the music of heavenly harps, one reflects, with a twinge of pity for the patient souls in whose flesh-and-blood features, sufficiently unlike those of the artist's fancy, one nevertheless seems to discern a spirit akin to that which shines forth in the ecstatic gaze of the cherubim.

#### THE WOOL SHOP.

In No. 80, we have the device of the dealer in woollen yarns—easily identified when one has learned that the red, blue and green rings are meant to suggest the skeins.

#### ROPE, CORD AND STRING.

No. 81 is one of the cruder emblems. It consists of a quantity of hempen string tied together in the form of a brush—the sign of the dealer in hemp. Rope, cord and string, of all sizes are to be found here—and a stiff and unwieldy article it is, as made in China.

#### SWORDS AND KNIVES.

On the following page we come again on a reminder of imperial days, in the sign of the dealer in swords and knives, No. 82. Fancy readily supplies the appropriate background of embroidered robes and high boots, thickly soled in felt, and turning up at the toes, like the points of the swords themselves. Whether flourished by the fierce Bannerman, or worn as an adjunct to the robe of state, the curved sword has passed into oblivion, which does not prevent its use as a shop sign to indicate where the “modern” variety now in vogue may be purchased.

#### EDGED TOOLS.

In No. 83 are plainly indicated the edged tools of the man of peace. One and all are made of iron. To the left are the tailor's scissors, and above them—what would be the reader's guess? It is the instrument plied by the chiropodist! Next it are the shoemaker's

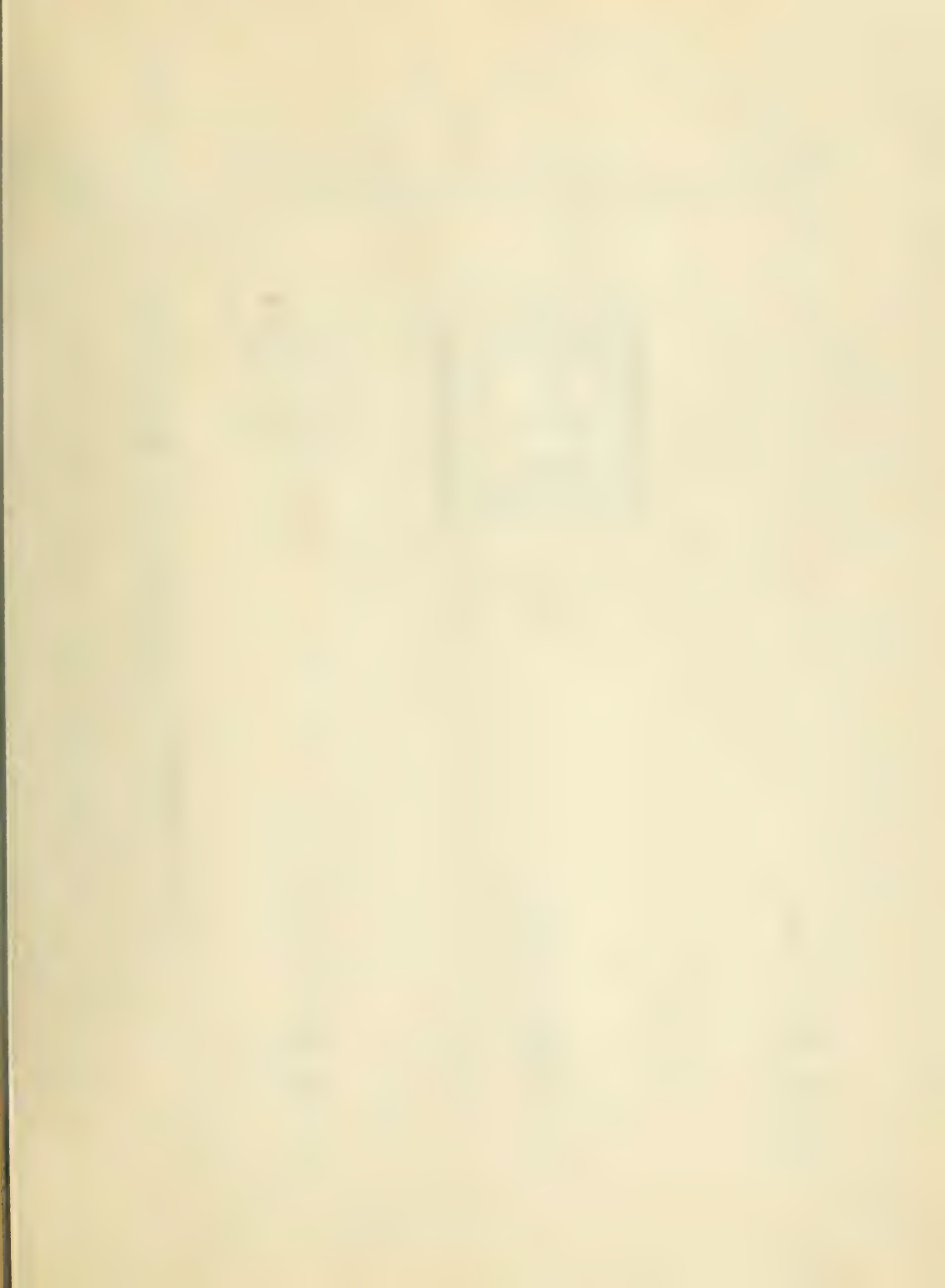
knives, one of which we found simulated in sign No. 50. The rest are for kitchen use. The preponderance of choppers gives an interesting insight into the method of preparing Chinese food. The peculiar object at the top is one of the implements used for "chopping" coins or for cutting lumps of silver. The pincers are shown in the lower left-hand corner.

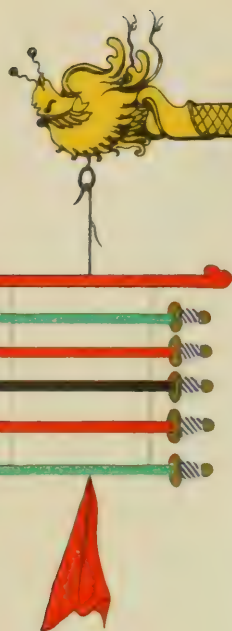
#### MIRRORS.

No. 84 is the sign of the dealer in mirrors of all kinds—a very popular article in China, both within and without the home. The Chinese lady is probably the most immaculately groomed woman in the world; yet her carriage, or motor-car, is always equipped with a mirror, and on her person, somewhere, is another—exactly as if the miraculous might happen, and a single hair in that polished coiffure stray from its appointed place, or some inconceivable variation take place in the fine skin, over which the powder puff travels without leaving any visible traces.

The squares, coloured variously in the shop device, refer to these pocket mirrors, and to those others, most important of all to the Chinese, that are set into the headdress of the baby, or worn by the bride, as a protection against devils, who are known to regard a mirror very much as His Satanic Majesty of the West reacts to holy water. The belief is that these beings dread, above all things, the sight of their own faces—and rightly so, one would say, judging by some of the specimen portraits seen on every hand. The bride's mirror is worn on a short neck chain, and rests not in front, but to the left, over the heart—and face outward, obviously, with its essential purpose in view.

Glass mirrors are, of course, a feature of modern China, belonging perhaps to the last twenty-five years of history. Formerly they were made of polished gold, brass, bronze and other metals, and it is one of these that "the young bride wears on the abdomen, on the day when she proceeds in a sedan chair to the house of the bridegroom, and likewise, when she returns in the chair to the family of her parents a short time after the marriage ceremony . . . . On the back are two embossed circles and four characters, reading: 'May your five children attain the highest literary degrees!'"





No. 82.  
Swords and Knives.

軍刀鋪幌子



No. 83.  
The Tool Shop

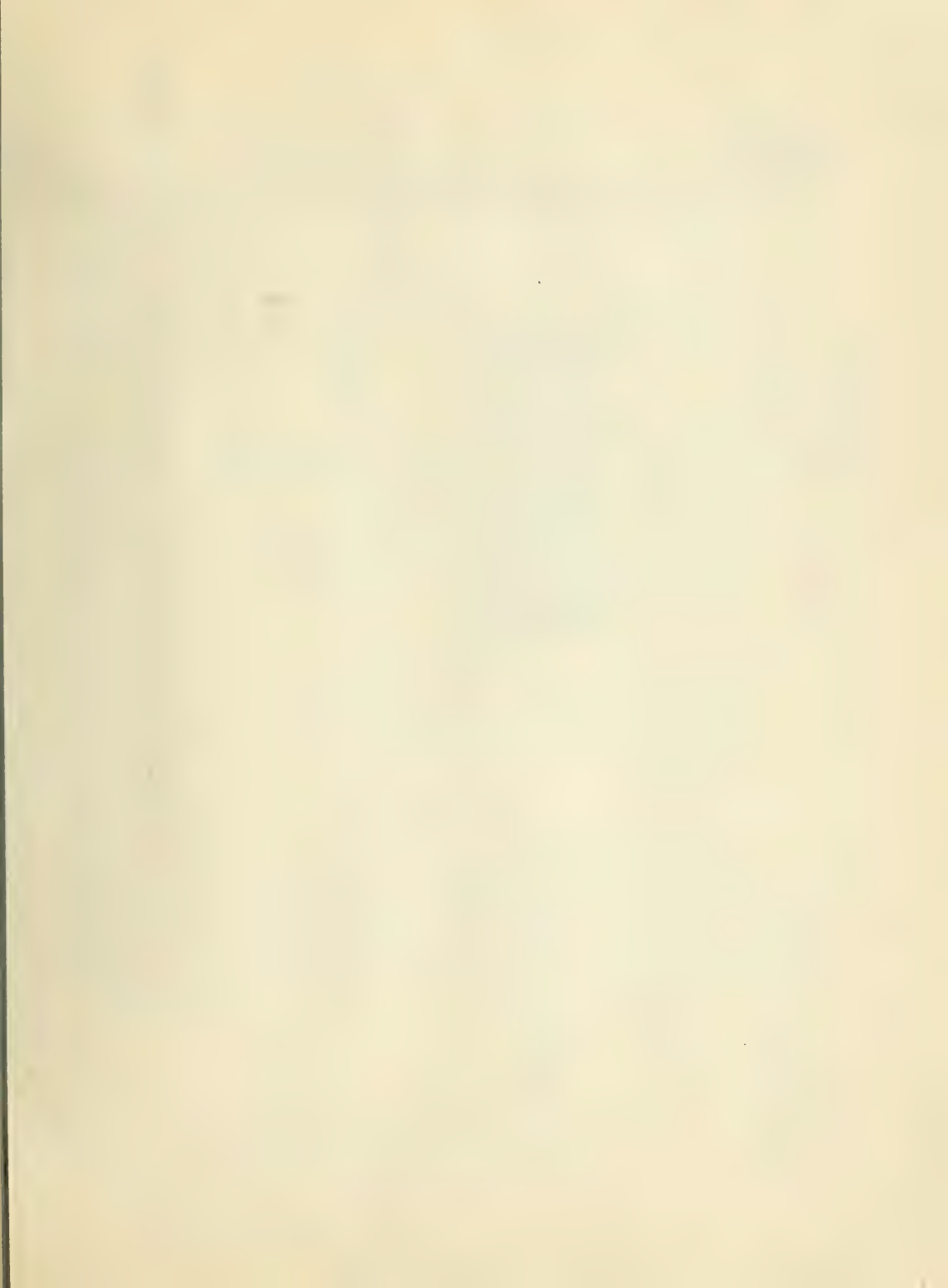
刀剪鋪幌子

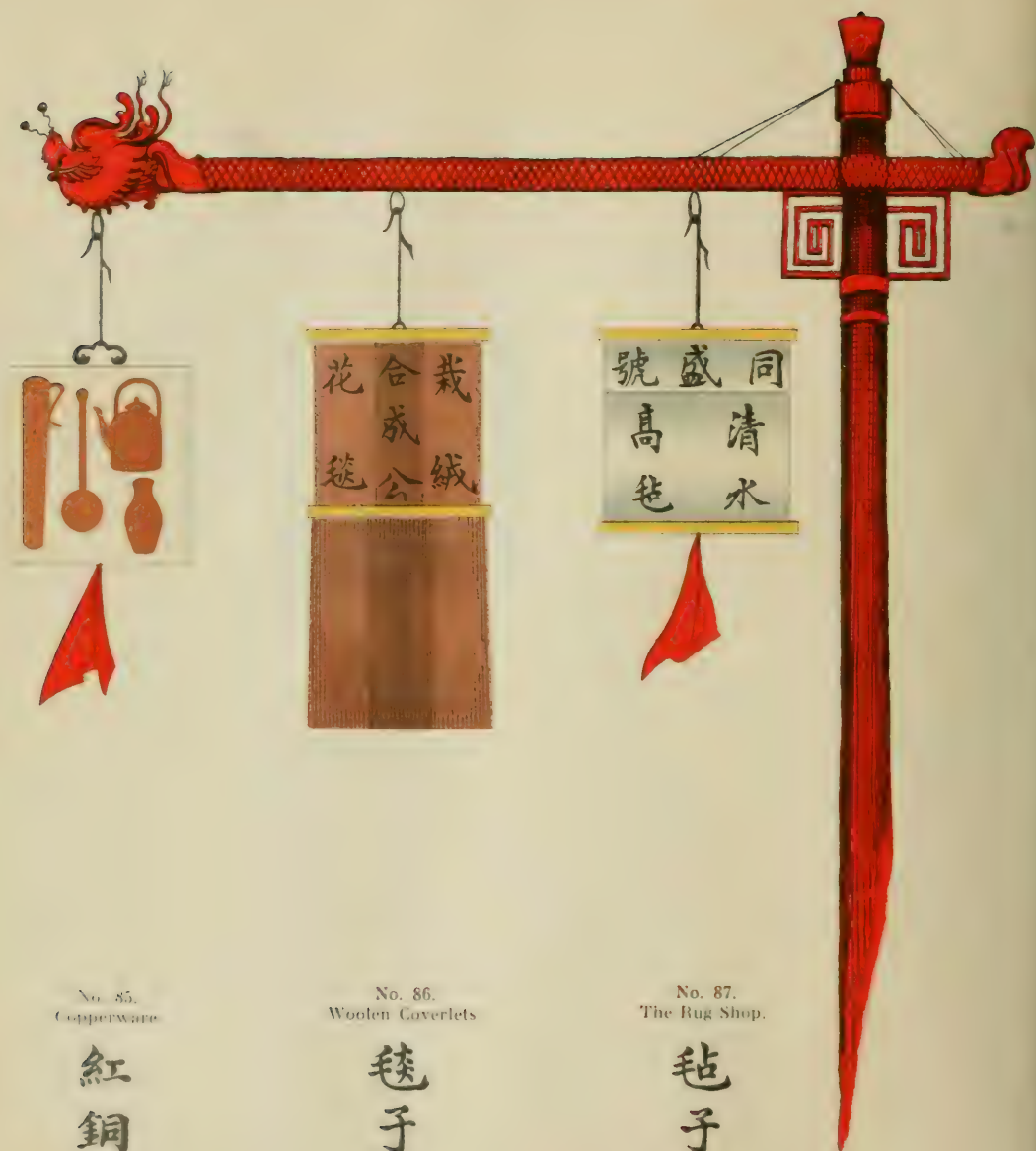


No. 84.  
The Mirror Shop.

挂鏡兒鋪幌子







No. 85.  
Copperware

紅銅鋪幌子

No. 86.  
Woolen Coverlets

毯子鋪幌子

No. 87.  
The Rug Shop.

毯子鋪幌子

In addition to this, there is also "the mirror to light the corpse," which is deposited on the breast of the loved one to serve him on his journey through the dark regions. This highly important mirror will come in for mention in a subsequent chapter.

A "magic mirror" also properly belongs in this list of talismans. This is worn by the woman with child, who would otherwise be unable to enter a house of mourning, without exposing the embryo to premature death.<sup>24</sup>

#### COPPERWARE.

Passing now to the next page of illustrations, we may imagine our composite guide on a housefurnishing expedition. For his tea-pots, jugs, bowls, match and ash-receivers, his ornamental vases, and whatever else he may fancy made of copper, he would stop at Sign No. 85, in which the reddish tint given these objects imperfectly suggests the gleaming metal. Fortunate indeed is the possessor of some of the fine examples of the old chased copper, which grow increasingly rare with the passing years, and which the modern Chinese show little interest in attempting to imitate.

#### WOOLLEN COVERS.

At No. 86 he would find the warm coverlet of woven wool which supplements the cotton pad on his bed, or on the brick *k'ang* that has a fire underneath it. The blanket for his ricksha, the table cover, hangings, and so on, also would be among the merchant's wares.

#### THE RUG SHOP.

At No. 87, he would choose the rugs for the floor. In the announcement on this signboard the dealer makes special mention of the small red mat on which the mandarin performed his *k'o-tows* before the Emperor, and which he brought with him in a box fastened behind his sedan chair. Sometimes the same box contained a complete set of robes of the same color, which would indicate that the official had received the dread summons that meant summary execution. In such event, the robes would be assumed on his arrival at the palace gates.

Such uses as these for the red mat have passed, but in the temples they lie at the foot of the shrine, in front of the altar, and at oldstyle weddings they receive the kneeling forms of bride and groom for the interminable series of *k'o-tows* to ancestors, parents, go-between, relatives, near and distant, and guests. And while at ultra-modern weddings, the *k'o-tow* is replaced by the ceremonial bow, reduced, in numbers to three or four at most, the red mat is none the less the central note in the scheme of decorations.

#### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

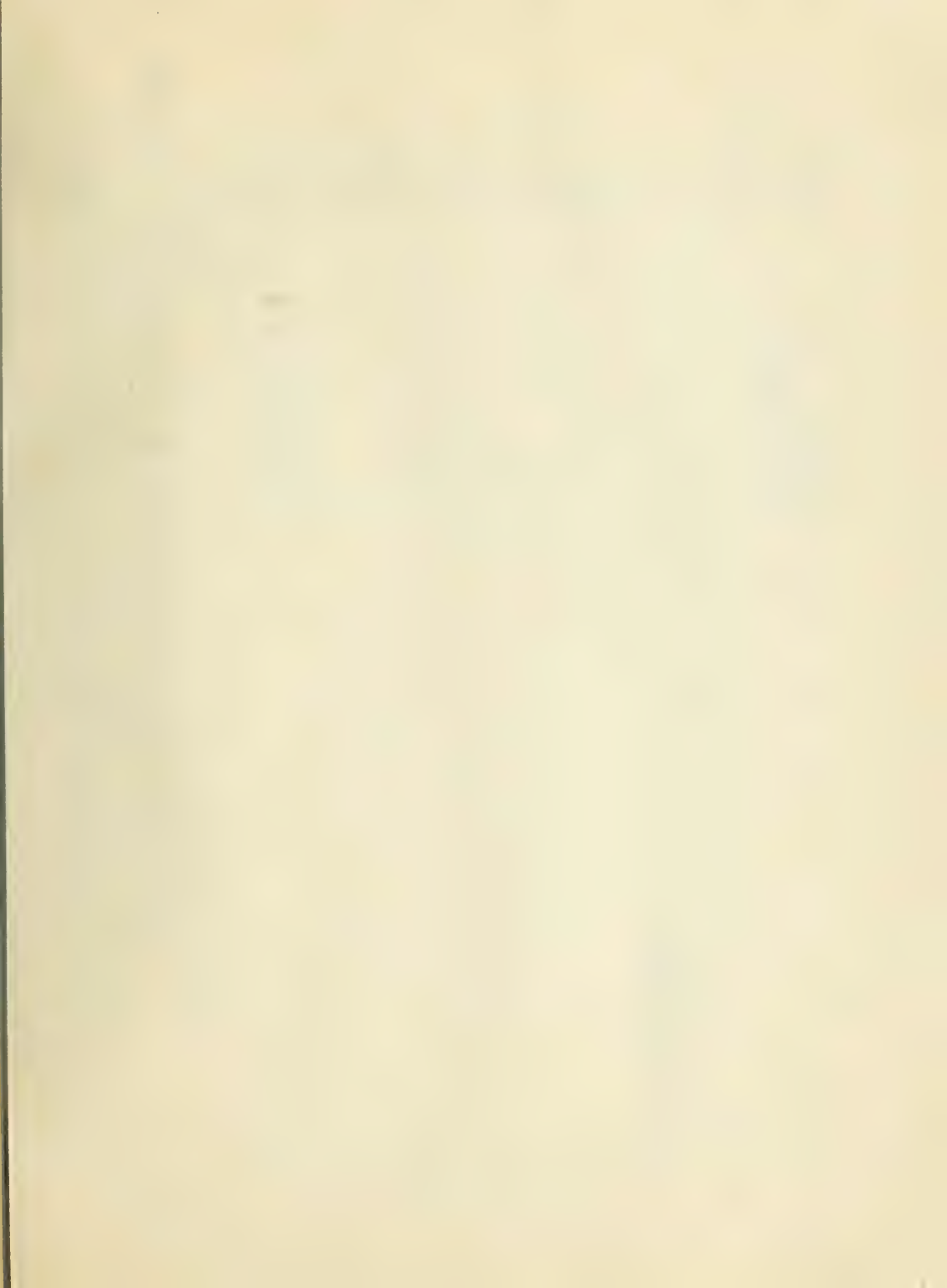
With the consideration of the next three signs we step into the atmosphere best suggested by the word, or term, "sing-song," Nos. 88 and 89 being inseparable from the thought of the "musical" feature of the Chinese dinner, better known to masculine than to feminine travellers. Sometimes these silk-cord-strung instruments accompany the voice of the Chinese geisha, the "sing-song girl"; but more frequently her song is a recitativo, and the instruments fill in the intervals between singers, one of these artists being specially assigned to each guest.

The drum, of course, plays its part in all manner of devil-discouraging ceremonies, whether connected with weddings, or on the approach of and after death—which seems a curious development from its original function as the instrument by which Yu the Great became advised that one of his subjects "wished to discourse with him upon the virtues which should adorn a monarch!"

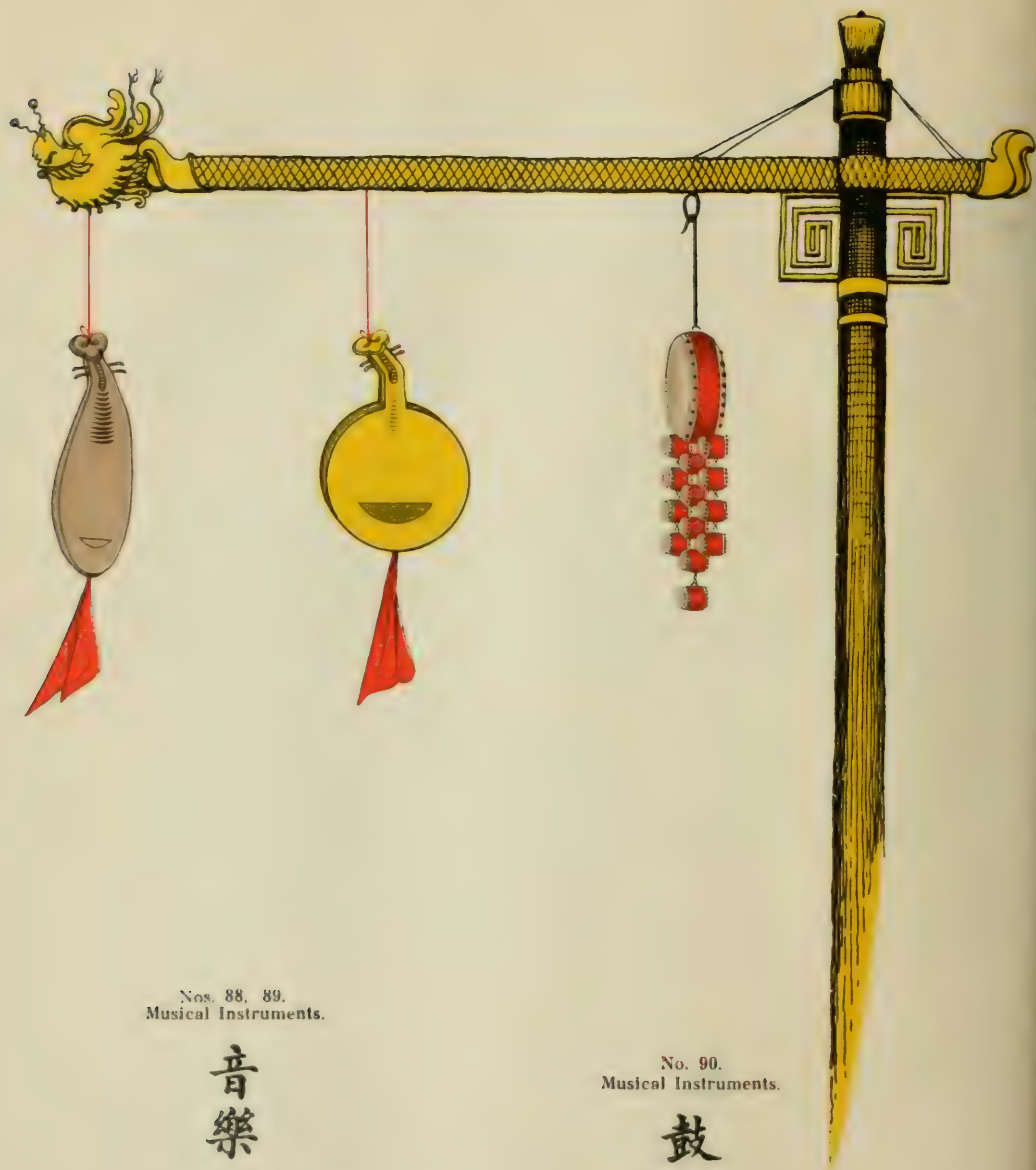
It also has its place in the "sing-song" world, and on the stage. All music, by the way, other than nuptial or funereal, comes within the meaning of this elastic term "sing-song," as it is applied by the Chinese.

#### BOWS AND ARROWS.

Two of the signs on the last page of our illustrations for this section take us into the children's world of China. The smaller of the two exhibits in the sign of the dealer in Bows and Arrows is described by the artist as a toy, which its appearance bears out clearly enough. The larger one, he declares, is used for "shooting birds."







Nos. 88, 89.  
Musical Instruments.

音樂鋪幌子

No. 90.  
Musical Instruments.

鼓鋪幌子

It is doubtful, however, if any great demand for these weapons exists to-day; though one comes on an imposing array of them, standing about eight feet in height, and ranged in a row on either side of the gateways that give entrance to the Imperial Tombs at Hsi Ling and Tung Ling. They have the look of being in use, and the attendants maintain that they are actually employed for bringing down birds, after which they are put back into their stands, and resume their functions among the relics of the past.

As an exhibit, especially when they are viewed against the background of Chinese history under the Manchus, various epochs of which are marked out in the Ching dynasty tombs, these ancient weapons, like the standards of the Bannermen, carry the mind back to the early history of the people who, with bows and arrows, spears and knives, fought so valiantly, and with such telling effect, against the bullets, European cannon and vastly superior numbers of their then apparently powerful neighbours, the Mings, during a decade of conflict.

At the time (several thousand years B.C.) when the folk whom we now know as the Chinese were settling in the Yellow River Valley, the progenitors of the Manchus,<sup>25</sup> then known as the Su-shen people, and consisting of various tribes and clans, occupied 450,000 square miles of territory extending from the Great Khingan Mountains to the sea, and including the basin of the Amur. The Su-shen (believed to have been a branch of the Eastern Huns) being disposed to cultivate their neighbours, they adopted the custom of sending a friendly mission, now and again, into the adjoining country; and the gifts borne by these emissaries to the Chinese Emperor, consisted of bows and arrows, "which for centuries afterward," says Li Ung Bing, "were regarded as the best models. For, even at a remote period the inhabitants of Manchuria were skilled in the use and manufacture of bows and arrows, and they themselves considered their workmanship good enough to be presented to the 'Son of Heaven'".

It was doubtless due to a justifiable faith in these weapons that the Manchus were slow to take up the use of firearms; for, although engaged in almost constant warfare with the Mings, since early in the seventeenth century, it was not until 1631, in the War of Liao-shi, that the Manchus gave evidence of at last having set their captives to the manufacture of cannon. However, it had been by strategy

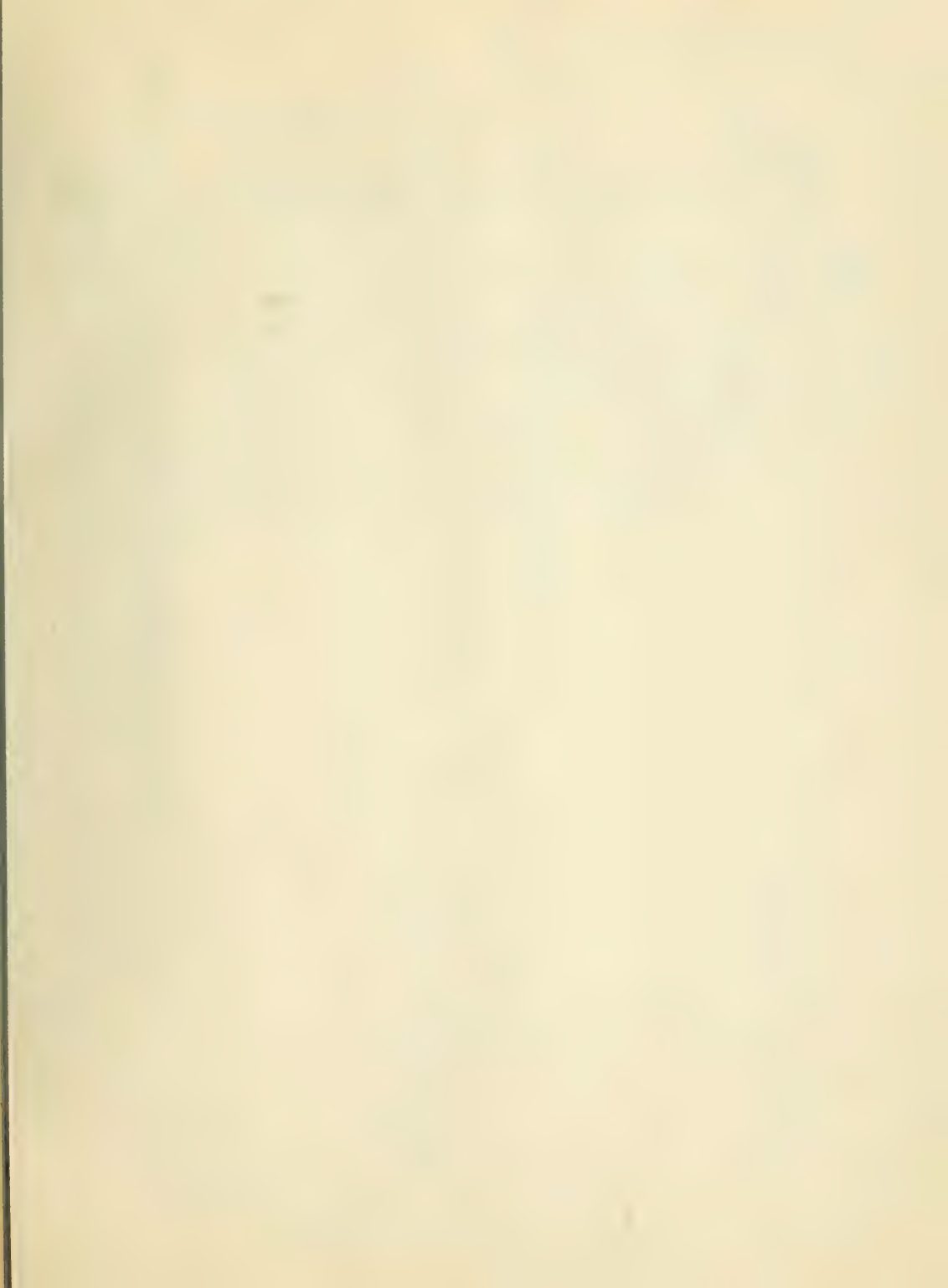
and superior generalship that the illustrious Nurhachu, the Genghis Khan of the Manchus, had throughout bested his contestants, when, after having consolidated the various clans into the first united Manchu nation (about A.D. 1618), he set about establishing the integrity of his boundaries. The incidents arising out of these quarrels, not to mention the blunders of his adversaries, spurred him ever onward on the path that years after his death in 1626, led to the final conquest of China.

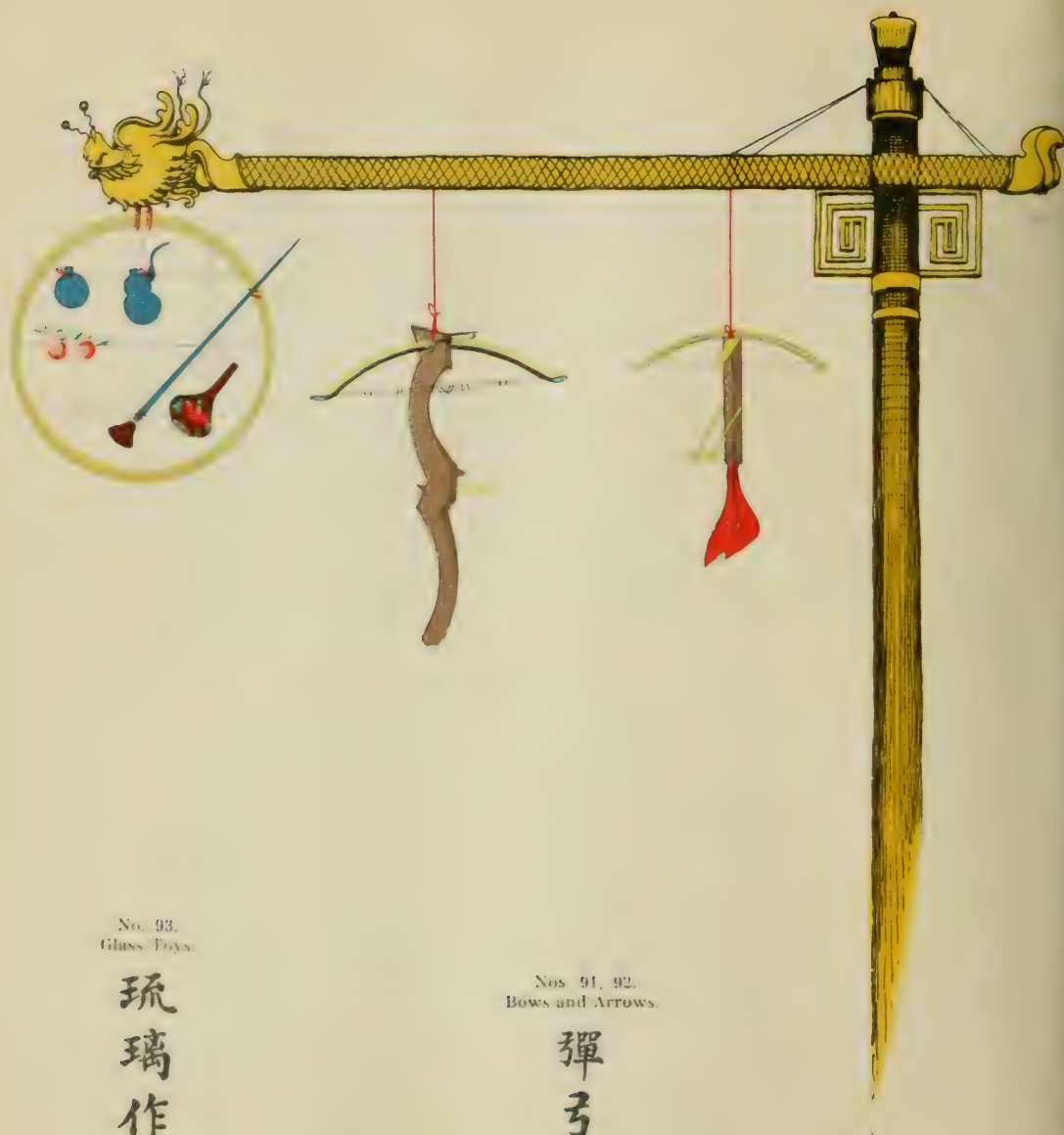
When making his declaration of war, based on complaints relative to border encroachments, Nurhachu, instead of proclaiming his intentions to the Ming Emperor, caused the document, known as the Seven Hates, to be burned, "thus notifying Heaven and Earth of the justice of his cause." Whatever effect this may have had on subsequent events, it was with 60,000 Manchus, armed with bows and arrows, spears and swords—and "cloudy ladders" for scaling walls—that the invincible Nurhachu braved the bullets and cannon of 240,000 Chinese, and succeeded in carrying the war into China.

#### GLASS TOYS.

No. 93 is the sign of the dealer in a special kind of toy, and it seems not too much to say that this is one of our most appealing bits, as much in the objects portrayed, as in the picture thus presented of the Chinese child. For these daintily coloured objects are not less delicate in their construction, being made of the thinnest and most fragile of glass, in the colours indicated. That they would ever be placed in the hands of a Western child as playthings is clearly unthinkable, yet such they are to the small folk of China. Except for the long-stemmed trumpet, which is capable of emitting a note of a sort, the others are intended only to be held in the hands; and the marvel is, their capacity to content the child—and their longevity, one reflects, on noting the peach, symbol of long life, beside the water bottle, and the familiar gourd, among the other objects shown in the sign.

In spite of the gambling games that appear to absorb the interest of the street urchin, the general run of Chinese children differ little from their Western brothers and sisters, in the desire for doll-babies,





No. 93.  
Glass Toys.

琉璃作房幌子

Nos. 91, 92.  
Bows and Arrows.

彈弓鋪幌子



toy houses, and all the details of the game of "playing house." The difference lies in the fact that probably the first efforts of the small boy's hands are directed toward the making of these objects for his own and his little sisters' amusement. Of recent years toyshops have sprung up in all the large cities of China, in which the array closely resembles that of a Western shop, from the toy soldiers to mechanical trains, wagons, and motor-cars—predominantly boys' toys, though those for the little girl are also to be noted. As for her little fingers, these find early training in the making of her dollies' clothes, just as happens in the West, but her children are mostly made of wood, carved by her older brother. It is interesting, too, to find the universal "diavolo" in great favour in China. It appears in many a picture of ancient times, and is said to have been invented here; but it is much more likely to have been introduced by some of the early missionaries.

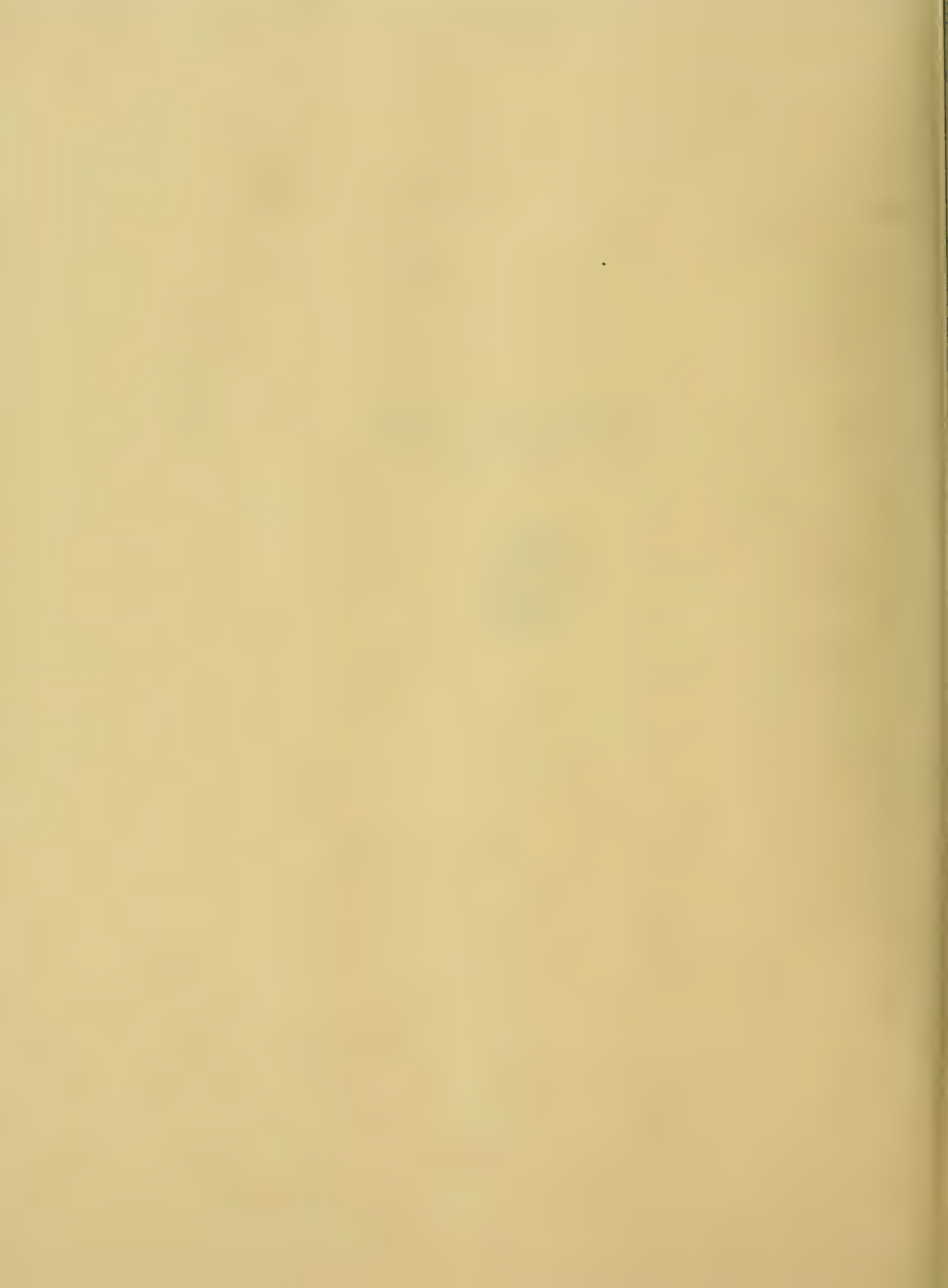


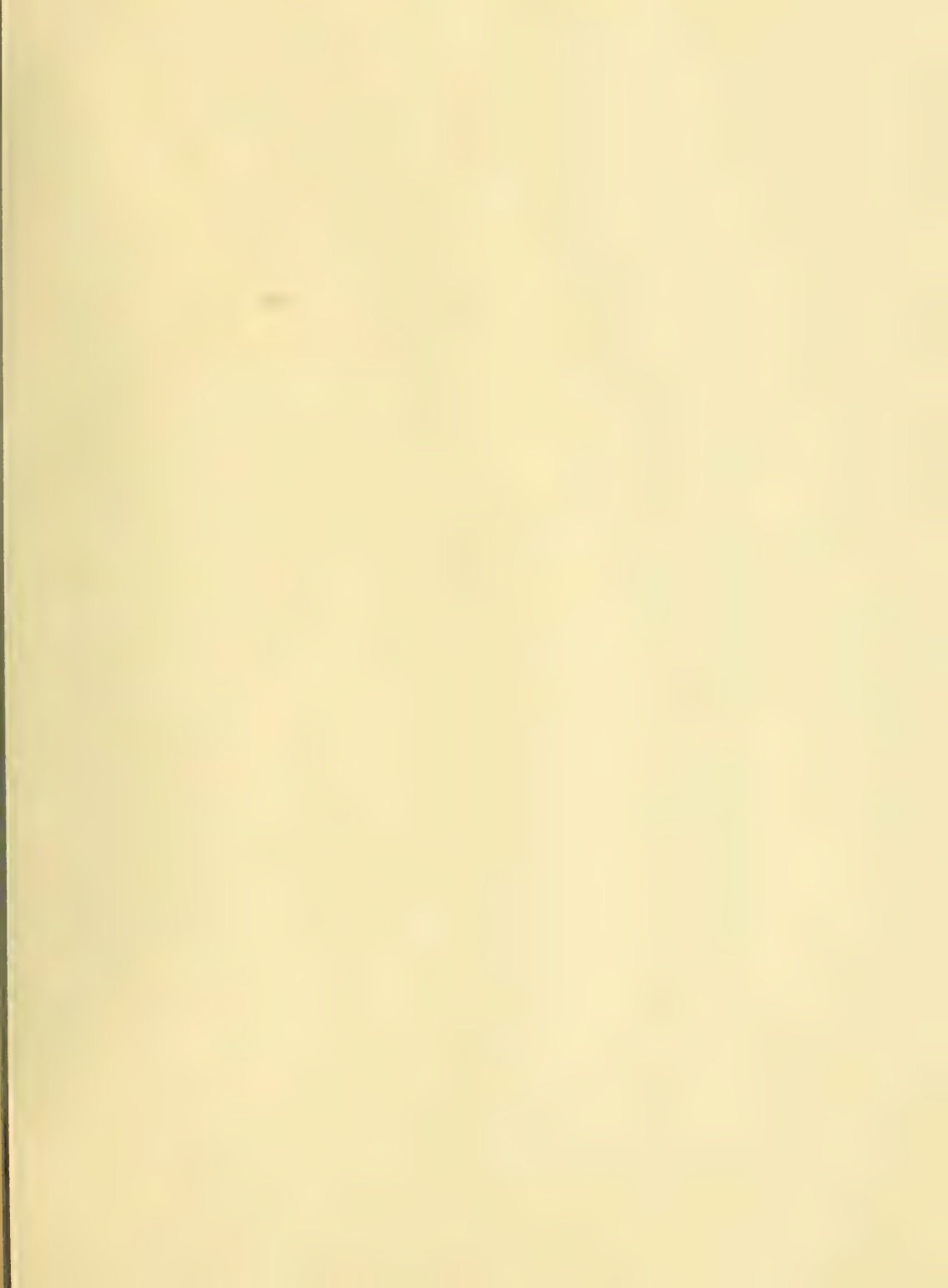
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HIS HEALTH

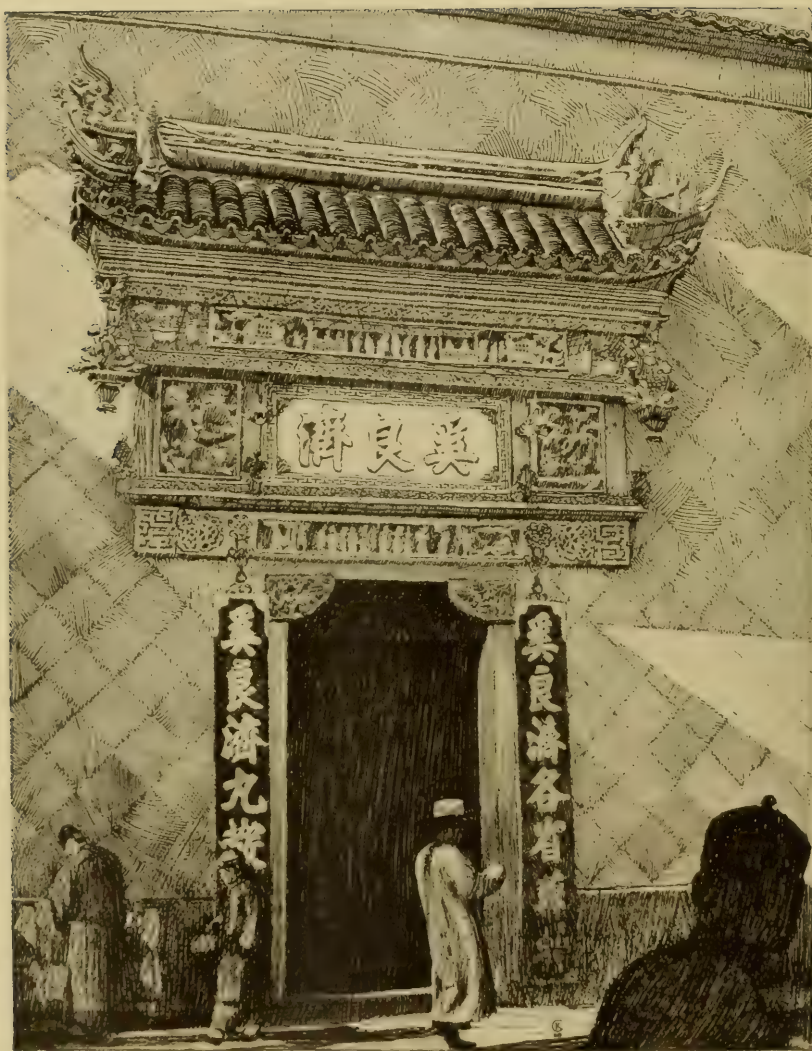
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A SHANGHAI MEDICINE SHOP

*Drawing by Kent Crane.*

*The characters over the door read: "Hsi Liang Tsi." "Hsi" is the name of the proprietor, and "Liang Tsi" signifies, "Saviour of human life with good medicine." The "liao pai" at right and left of the entrance announce that Mr. Hsi sells pills, powders, ointments, and medicinal herbs from various provinces.*

## Chapter Ten:

### *Medicines—Foreign or Native?*



F the many aspects of China which the alien mind finds difficult of assimilation, perhaps the most baffling is that involved in the question of the Chinese materia medica. By foreign and foreign-trained native physicians it is, of course, discredited wholesale; and any attempt on the part of the layman to assume an impartial attitude in the matter is likewise relentlessly discouraged.

Despite which fact, the latter finds himself conjecturing as to the possible efficacy of native remedies, when considered in the light of their interrelation with other elements of racial psychology—especially in view of the unique achievement by the Chinese of an uninterrupted national existence for thousands of years.<sup>26</sup> Any suggestion of the sort, however, when given voice, is met by crushing arguments based on abnormal death rates from this or that disease, and the high rate of infant mortality which has always prevailed in China. Thus, from the point of view of the foreign-medicine world, the question of the “work to be done” admits

of no doubt whatever, and therefore is not debatable.

As to this latter item, viz., the conversion of the masses of the Chinese people from native practices to the Western school of medicine, and from ignorance of the laws of sanitation and disease-prevention to a comprehension of the individual's responsibility toward public health, it is possible and in fact easy, in a hurried tour of China, to form an extravagant estimate of the extent to which Western influence has carried thus far.

When one has been conducted over a series of spectacular monuments to this heroic concept of man's duty to man, and observes successive groups of Chinese doctors and nurses, in operating-room and laboratory; finds the appliances of Western medical practice in some of the modern prisons; learns that the Government has decreed that foreign medicines shall guard the health of the Chinese army; and takes note of plague-prevention, and public-health educational campaigns penetrating to remote villages in the most distant provinces, one is apt to come away under the impression that the new movement is more than launched—that it is, indeed, one of the established facts.

This deduction, when properly understood as presenting a long and broad perspective—as if the field were viewed from the top of a mountain—is by no means a false one. But the dimensions of the “job” assumed by the early medical missionaries, and the period of time that must elapse before the new shall have made any appreciable inroads on the old, may be judged only from closer study. In other words, it is the observer who has been brought into hand-to-hand contact with actual conditions who is in a position to recognize the present stage of the work as an exhibition of real progress that augurs well for the future.

The history of the organized efforts at introducing the school of foreign medicine into China has no real place in our pages, being a special subject, and one voluminously treated by those best qualified for the task. It is a story teeming with humorous, as well as serious, incident. But the former must be gathered in the rare “off” moments of the work-ridden medical missionaries, to whom the cut-and-dried annual reports are monumental burden enough, and productive of no desire to lighten their contents with amusing touches—obvious as it is, that these latter are the mainstay and prop of the workers in this field.



A few such sidelights, however, gleamed forth at an annual convention of the China Medical Missionary Association, held in Peking in 1920; and briefly to recount some of these would seem a not inappropriate preparation for our prospective tour of the native medicine shops. Moreover, the reader will thus be afforded a better insight into the foreign-medicine movement than is to be gained from a tour of the imposing edifice—The Peking Union Medical College—where these pathetically amusing revelations were made.

It was in the course of an address delivered by the head of another of China's impressive medical colleges, Dr. Harold Balme, of the Shantung Christian University, at Tsinanfu, that the humorous side of medical missionary work shone out so brightly. The address was one that had been awaited with interest, as it embodied the results of the first "enquiry into the scientific efficiency of mission hospitals," to which the delegates to the convention, and many others, had contributed. It had taken one year to gather and tabulate the material!

The instrument employed by Dr. Balme to extract such information as was contained in the report was the time-honoured questionnaire, which, when it descends upon the overworked missionary in its simplest form, is as the proverbial bit of red cloth to the undisciplined bull. But Dr. Balme's questionnaire was no ordinary document. It consisted of questions that went into the most hair-splitting details—as it seemed to many—and covered two sides of a sheet of paper of foolscap size. It was sent broadcast to the 300 Protestant mission hospitals in China, and afflicted the staff, nearly always undermanned, of some remote station—by courtesy termed a hospital, though frequently conducting its work in a rude shack—with such questions as these:—

"How many cubic feet of air space do you provide per patient?"

"What make of bacteriological incubator do you have?"

"Are your kitchens and latrines adequately screened?"

"What means do you use for sterilizing bedding and mattresses?"

"Is your water supply pure?" "Do you have running water laid on throughout the hospital?" and "How often do you bathe your patients?"

"Do you have electric lighting, and how is your hospital heated?"

And so on, minutely, and at great length. The first result, as was to be expected, had been a prodigious silence on all sides. Then,

little by little, came manifestations of life. In many cases, the questionnaires returned to their source with choice specimens of sarcasm written diagonally across, and no queries answered. From these it appeared that the very term "scientific efficiency," emanating as it did from one of the best-equipped plants in China, had operated to brand the innocent perpetrator with the mark of professional condescension. One of these contributions consisted of an arrow pointed at the question as to how the hospital was heated. It was the only query answered (except those asking for the name and location of the hospital) and the reply was: "By hot air from Tsinanful"

Others witheringly expressed wonder at the lack of "more important" work in some districts as compared to others, naming no names, as it were, in which the days were too crowded to leave time for "extraneous" considerations.

In the end, it was found that, out of the total of 300 Protestant mission hospitals in China, 180 had answered faithfully such queries as were found applicable; and in the spaces allotted to such as were not, equally pointed disclosures of violent contrasts in mission hospital equipment had been entered.

One of the questions, for example, had to do with the custom of permitting the Chinese patient to supply his own bedding, or whatever part of it necessity dictated. The information asked was, "If you observe this custom, what do the patients bring?" One of the replies was: "Mostly bugs!"

An example of the ire aroused by the question as to running water, was the answer: "We don't need it. The patients do all the running when they know there's a bath in prospect."

On the serious side some of the results by the investigation were as follows:<sup>27</sup>

Fifty per cent. of those replying admitted that they seldom or never bathed their patients; only 8 per cent. had access to pure water, and only 6 per cent. were equipped with running water; 34 per cent. were without nurses, foreign or Chinese, and depended entirely on the patient's friends for this branch of the work, which included the diet, over which they were thus naturally deprived of any control. Eighty per cent. had but one foreign, or one foreign-trained Chinese doctor—the term "foreign-trained" signifying "foreign-medicine-trained," and not necessarily that the Chinese doctor had been trained



abroad. (There are twenty-six medical colleges in China, thirteen of them missionary.) The same percentage, eighty, declared themselves "unable to base surgical and medical work on pathological investigation."

One bed to every 20,370 people proved to be the extent of the accommodation possible to the Protestant mission hospitals in China, but over one-third of these were not possessed of bedding; and in addition to these, the half of those more fortunate in this regard were unequipped to cope with the question of sterilization of bedding—or, indeed, of dealing with hospital linen at all. Other lacking essentials may be judged from these disclosures.

In this connection the circumstance comes to mind of a missionary arriving at headquarters in Shanghai, to seek aid for the sufferers in the area of the earthquake in Kansu province, in 1918. This was the strange phenomenon of the "walking mountain" that buried a whole countryside in its progress, and took a far greater toll of human lives than did the subsequent catastrophe in Japan. In China, however, the cataclysm had been meagerly reported in the foreign press. Such details as were known to the missionary—who had been one of the victims—reached Shanghai for the first time on his arrival, six months later; and it was not until two years after the disaster that the facts appeared in an account published by the *National Geographic Magazine*. To comprehend such a curious state of affairs one has only to consider the remote situation of the province, and some of its natural characteristics.

In fact, Kansu, next door neighbour to Tibet, and the habitat of the Chinese Moslem, is one of China's "wild" provinces, and the second largest—inaccessible, sparsely populated, and mountainous, with an elevation beginning at 5,000 feet and finishing at 20,000. It is called a "province of transit" because of the trade routes passing through; but it is without railways, navigable rivers, or roads wide enough for cart traffic, so that goods are transported by camel, mule, donkey, and even man power. The journey across consumes about the same period of time as a trip to London from Shanghai, via Suez.

The inhabitants, besides the Chinese, consist of emigrants from Mongolia, Tibet and Turkestan; a large proportion of aborigines, speaking a dialect of their own; Salar Moslems speaking Turki; Tung-siang Moslems of Mongolian speech; and Arabic-speaking Moslems; and through this welter of tongues the missionary in question had

made his way, as an evangelist, to a rude village that lay just outside the centre of the area later visited by the earthquake. For a long time his evangelistic efforts met with no success, and he attributed their failure to something within himself.

One day, while in this state of mental and spiritual discouragement, there was brought to him, in a hastily-contrived litter, the unfortunate victim of an accident. Examination disclosed a hopelessly mangled leg, and the missionary believed he saw before him a dying man. Three years of previous training for medical work told him that amputation was essential; and with nothing better than an ordinary saw, he performed the operation, which the patient survived.

Thereupon destiny mapped out his course. Immediately he was besieged with "cases," and his rude home became an "operating-room." For three years, pocket- or kitchen-knives, and saws had given him the open sesame which had eluded him before. One of his sensational "cures" had been that of the only wealthy man in the neighbourhood—a Chinese—whose gratitude led him to present the missionary with a piece of property on which were several buildings. In one of these the latter had established his "hospital." The others proved mere encumbrances, and for some time he had been puzzled for a means of removing them; though had such been offered—which decidedly they had not—he would not have ventured to use them. Then the earthquake intervened, and destroyed all.

When this dramatic recital, delivered in an even monotone—and extracted bit by bit—had come to an end, and the speaker had left, consternation reigned among his hearers; and an appeal was immediately sent out to hospitals in Shanghai, asking for the donation of discarded surgical instruments. A few days afterward, when the missionary called at headquarters, for his leavetaking, before setting out again on his long journey back to the wilds of Kansu, a wooden box stood on one of the desks. During a pause in the conversation, the lid was lifted, and he was negligently invited to "look!"—which he did, uncomprehendingly. Then, realization brought the first show of emotion; and, rendered speechless, he departed, the box under his arm, as something too precious to be entrusted to coolie carriage.

If we have seemed to stray unduly from the path marked out by our subject, it is to be hoped that the reader by patiently following us, will apprehend some of the temptations that assail the writer

who seeks faithfully to encompass any aspect of this vast and complex country and its people. Both are so bound up with geographical conditions and traditions that entice and lead the mind away from prescribed limits, that these, in the impact of Occident and Orient, lose the sharply defined outlines laid out in the beginning.

The foregoing sketches are, of course, merely a very superficial index to the foreign-medicine movement; but they will serve, perhaps to demonstrate the gap between general conditions and those prevailing in the large hospital plants, and to set the splendid Rockefeller gift in Peking at the pinnacle of achievement in China. And if the impression has not already been gained that the climb to this summit is likely to consume scores of years, perhaps it will arise in the course of the following pages devoted to an explanation of a few of the representative medicine shop signs, that, by their very existence and numbers, offer mute, but eloquent testimony to the hold which the Chinese pharmacopœia continues to maintain over the masses of the people.

Yet, again, as to this matter of making predictions in China: Directly one has fallen into this Western habit, contradictory symptoms begin to crowd for attention. There is, for example, the little known fact—whatever it may portend for the future—of the Empress Dowager herself having “seen the light,” and given material support, at a critical juncture, to that very medical work now known to fame as the institution we have just named—the Peking Union Medical College, built on the foundations laid by the London Missionary Society, and delivered over by its representative, Dr. Thomas Cochrane, amid due and impressive ceremonies at the dedication of the College in October, 1919.

Like most tales that centre about this imagination-stirring figure of Chinese history, the story related of the Empress Dowager by Dr. Cochrane is a curiously interesting one. It goes back to the days of the Boxer Uprising, on the outbreak of which Dr. Cochrane, with his wife and baby, made a sensational escape from their mission station in Mongolia. After months of privation and great danger, the trio reached Peking, in the bare possession of their lives and nothing more, either shortly before, or after, the return of the monarch. Finding the mission in Peking in a state of ruin, Dr. Cochrane determined to make an attempt to revive the work; and that abundant need existed

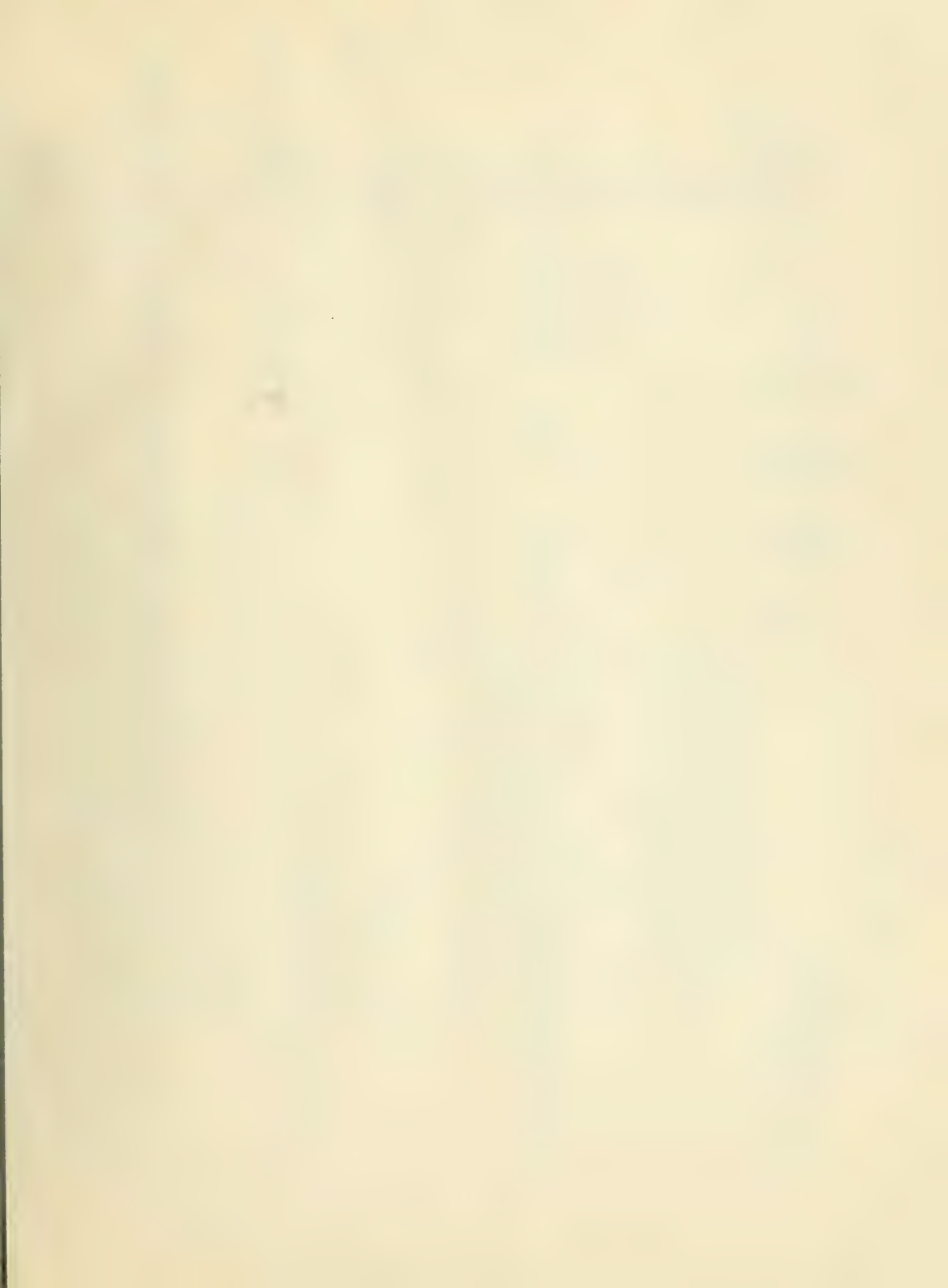


for the physician's ministrations perhaps goes without saying. As a first step in this direction, a small fish shop was hired, which soon proved inadequate, so that other little centres were established. And, at about this time, Dr. Cochrane received a summons to the Palace. The Chief Eunuch, and favourite of the Empress, the notorious "Cobbler's Wax Li," lay ill and the Empress had ordered them to bring the foreign doctor.

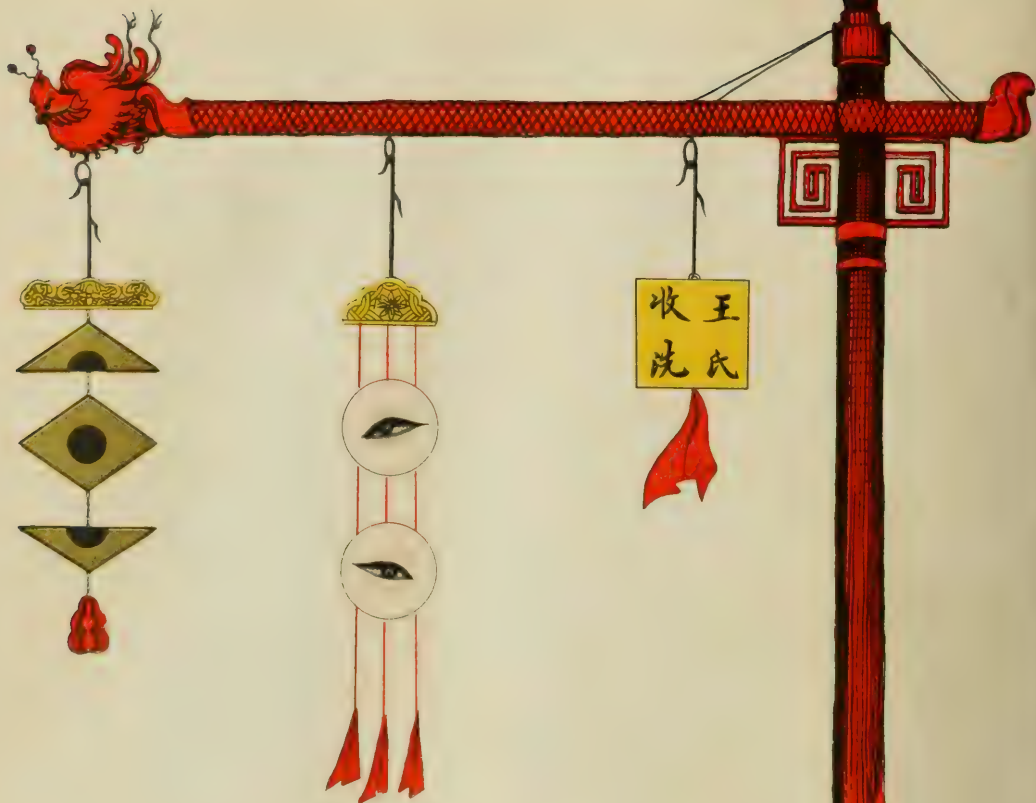
An interesting point, and one that led later, to the doctor's appointment as physician in charge of the health of all the Palace eunuchs! But its present application is, that the first summons had set him to thinking, and as a result, Dr. Cochrane was inspired to do a most unique thing. Feeling that an appeal to the Empress for aid in his work of reconstruction could do no harm, and might be productive of results, he determined to chance it. Whereupon he actually committed the unheard-of act of addressing a personal letter to the Throne itself—the only time, it is said, that the Empress Dowager was ever so approached by a foreigner.

Dire consequences might have followed, and doubtless would have done, in the old days. But the Old Buddha had imbibed many a bitter lesson in the course of that memorable crusade against the foreigner, and her response to the appeal was the gift of something like Tls. 60,000. Nor was this all. Dr. Cochrane was summoned in audience on several occasions, subsequently, on matters relating to his professional duties at the Palace; and further manifestations of imperial favour toward the restoration of the mission property, whenever asked for, were found forthcoming—as when the removal of undesirable adjacent buildings was besought, and graciously granted.

There is just one word more as to the relative status of native and foreign medicines in Chinese regard, that should be spoken before turning to the consideration of the subject of native medicines. This is the fact, reported equally by foreign-trained native and foreign doctors, that faith in the efficacy of native remedies undermines the efforts of army and hospital alike, by the surreptitious use of these in conjunction with the Western, whenever opportunity offers; and that these latter are not difficult to find is conceivable enough, after what has been said of the handicaps under which so many of the mission stations are pursuing their tasks.







No. 94.  
The Apothecary's Shop.

藥  
鋪  
幌  
子

No. 95.  
The Eye Doctor.

眼  
藥  
鋪  
幌  
子

No. 96.  
The Midwife.

收  
生  
產  
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子

## Chapter Eleven:

### *Native Medicine Shops.*

My wife's little daughter once fell very ill,  
And we called for a doctor to give her a pill.  
He wrote a prescription, which now we will give her,  
In which he has ordered a mosquito's liver;  
And then, in addition, the heart of a flea,  
And a half-pound of fly wings to make her some tea.<sup>28</sup>

*Chinese Nursery Rhyme.*



IN China, when the Western mind does not, from the first, react violently against Oriental custom—which frequently enough happens, to the great discomfort of its possessor—it soon begins to acquire the faculty of unlearning, or at least of adapting, habits of thought springing from an heredity and training which the new surroundings do their best to set at naught. It is not surprising, therefore, if native medicines take their place among the features of Chinese life which are accepted as a matter of course—or perhaps, perforce, speaking from the standpoint of the foreign “missy,” who has found that it avails her nothing at all to be otherwise minded on the subject. In other words, the householder may avail herself of the provisions, where they exist, for the periodic inspection and general treatment of her servants, while, at the same time, looking with no hostile eye on their resort to the simples and ointments to which they attach much more importance. In fact, it is within the experience of most of these that disorders disappear

almost miraculously under native treatment, after having refused to yield to the most approved of modern methods. And tales are not wanting of foreigners themselves having successful recourse to these remedies.

Even the foreign physician testifies to an arresting experience, now and then, as notably one such scientist, returning to Shanghai after ten years spent in the interior, who expressed his surprise at having discovered that it is "old custom" in China to drape the bed of a smallpox patient with red curtains. The malaria-breeding mosquito, he found, was well-recognized, and was hunted by children in the country districts, who were rewarded by their mothers at the rate of so much per insect brought home.

It is perhaps quite unnecessary to mention here, that the study of medicine was not included in the educational provisions of Imperial China, the existing schools devoted to the purpose being part of the system borrowed from the West. Thus, according to Chinese custom a man's vocation was and is determined by that of his forebears, and hence, he is a doctor simply and solely for the reason that his father and grandfather had chosen this line of work. His endowments appear to his patients to border closely on the magical, at least so far as diagnosis is concerned. For example, it is not for him to ask for a recital of symptoms, this custom on the part of the foreign physician being regarded as a confession of weakness that seriously impairs the confidence of the patient at the very outset. The Chinese method is for the patient to remain silent, while the doctor places three fingers on the pulse and proceeds with the history of the case, recounting the symptoms, from the earliest to the last, the number of days the patient has not eaten—always a much-emphasized point—and the duration of specific derangements. When these are not accurate, it only proves that the doctor is not a "goodee" one, and the patient seeks another—the feeling being that these things the doctor must know, without being told. Otherwise, of what use to allow him to prescribe?

These sentiments it is possible to gather quite readily from the "man in the street" who feels assured that he may speak frankly, and it will be found that the prevailing opinion among this class is: "Chinese medicine for the Chinese man." A typical illustration of this point is provided by the very common malady in China, trachoma.

The Number One Boy, for example, on the appearance of the first symptoms, is required by his master to visit the dispensary; and, as he would remark, what happens? The foreign doctor, in the eye department, confronted with the most obvious sort of evidence, descends to the inconsequent. "What's the matter with you?" he asks, and the Chinese, with his sense of the ridiculous stirred to the pitch that excludes everything else, says to himself: "What for you ask *me*? You no can see?" The battle is lost before the fight has properly begun. Yet this antagonism is as nothing compared to that which arises when his dispensary experience is received at the hands of one of his own race. Here, the absolute irreducible limit is held to be discovered, and the state of mind of the patient is too involved with native thought processes to be fathomed by a mere foreigner.

The fee of the generality of Chinese doctors ranges all the way from twenty cents to one dollar, the former being the average, and the latter that of the "very goodee" doctor. Real high water mark, however, is said to reach sums approximating the fees paid to foreign specialists. The prescription emanating from the former type of practitioner entails the expenditure of ten cents, on the average, and frequently only of a number of coppers. The Chinese worker being probably the most improvident in the world, everything depends on his ability to return to his task, and hence speed is the first requirement demanded in the curative operation of medicines. It is precisely on this point that the foreign householder learns to yield, reflecting that, whatever they may be, native remedies appear to possess the quality of rapid repair, and hence of practical non-interference with the domestic machinery.

But it is on glancing over the Chinese pharmacopœia, and finding the large number of familiar entries set down therein, that the layman is rendered still more confused as to the fundamental elements of the native-*versus*-foreign-medicines conflict, and recognizes the problem as one based, evidently, largely on method. Nothing bears out this state of mind so eloquently as that choice bit of philosophy composed by the famous Sung poet, Po Chu I, at the age of 61, thirteen years before his death, in A.D. 846, in which are mentioned remedies and health-conserving discretions thus shown to be common knowledge among the Chinese of that day. The revelations occur under the title, "Thinking of the Past,"<sup>29</sup> and run as follows:



"In an idle hour I thought of former days;  
 And former friends seemed to be standing in the room.  
 And then I wondered 'Where are they now?'  
 Like fallen leaves they have tumbled to the Nether Springs.  
 Han Yü [another famous poet] swallowed his sulphur pills,  
 Yet a single illness carried him straight to the grave.  
 Yüan Chen smelted autumn stone (carbamide crystals)  
 But before he was old, his strength crumbled away.  
 Master Tu possessed the 'Secret of Health':  
 All day long he fasted from meat and spice.  
 The Lord Ts'ui, trusting a strong drug,  
 Through the whole winter wore his summer coat.  
 Yet—some by illness and some by sudden death . . . .  
 All vanished ere their middle years were passed.  
 Only I, who have never dieted myself  
 Have thus protracted a tedious span of age,  
     I, who in young days  
 Yielded lightly to every lust and greed;  
 Whose palate craved only for the richest meat  
 And knew nothing of bismuth or calomel.  
 When hunger came I gulped steaming food;  
 When thirst came, I drank from the frozen stream.  
 With verse I served the spirits of my Five Guts;  
 With wine I watered the three Vital Spots."

Among other familiar names in the list of drugs used by the Chinese—which is far too lengthy to quote in full—may be mentioned: aconite, asafoetida, digitalis, camphor, angelica, cardamum, cubebs, dragon's blood (made from a species of rattan) and fritillary. The castor bean plant, too, is everywhere in evidence in the Chinese countryside, though it is not a native custom to extract the oil.

The British Maritime Customs' List of Chinese Medicines, and that of Sir Alexander Hosie, enumerate 220 various kinds, of which 189 are vegetable, all grown in one province—Szechuen. But the remedies the Chinese use most of all, if the display in the apothecary's shop is any indication—and herein lies, doubtless, the crux of the whole matter—are made from dried centipedes, scorpions, silkworms, beetles, excuviae of cicadae, toad bile, bats' dung, cantharides, bears'



galls, hedgehogs' skins, stags' antlers, and tigers' bones, though, as has been mentioned, all parts of this animal are used medicinally, and certain of them are believed to be especially efficacious in children's diseases. The ubiquitous lotus figures here, also, as it does in the list of foods—root, stem, leaves and seeds. A few of the minerals listed are realgar, zinc bloom, fossil teeth, brown mica, cinnabar ore, and clay. But, in the last analysis, it is evident from observation and inquiry, that native faith accords a pre-eminent place to the centipedes, scorpions, toads and animal parts, as curative agents. These, together with the roots and herbs, are referred to as "organic matter," the body's deficient supply of which causes disease.

\* \* \* \*

Among the rare old volumes on China that line the shelves of the library of the Royal Asiatic Society's China Branch in Shanghai, there is one, published in 1800, that so vividly portrays the China of those days, that one is tempted to quote from sundry references to Chinese medicines and medical practice observed by the author. The text, in French and English, elucidates a series of quaint illustrations of costumes and incidents encountered on the streets; and throughout the volume one imbibes the atmosphere of a period when the foreigner made his way through the Celestial Empire almost, and sometimes, actually at the peril of his life—in which respect, one may pause to remark, Chinese history appears, at the present time, to be striving to repeat itself. The title page of the book (condensed) reads:

"COSTUMES DE LA CHINE,"

George Henry Mason, Écuyer,

Major du ci-devant 102<sup>ème</sup> régiment de sa Majesté,

à Londres,

W. Millar, Old Bond Street

M D C C C .

"In China," says Major Mason, "anyone may practice physic, and the Chinese have many peculiar practices. The pulse, for example, is felt in various parts of the body . . . . ."

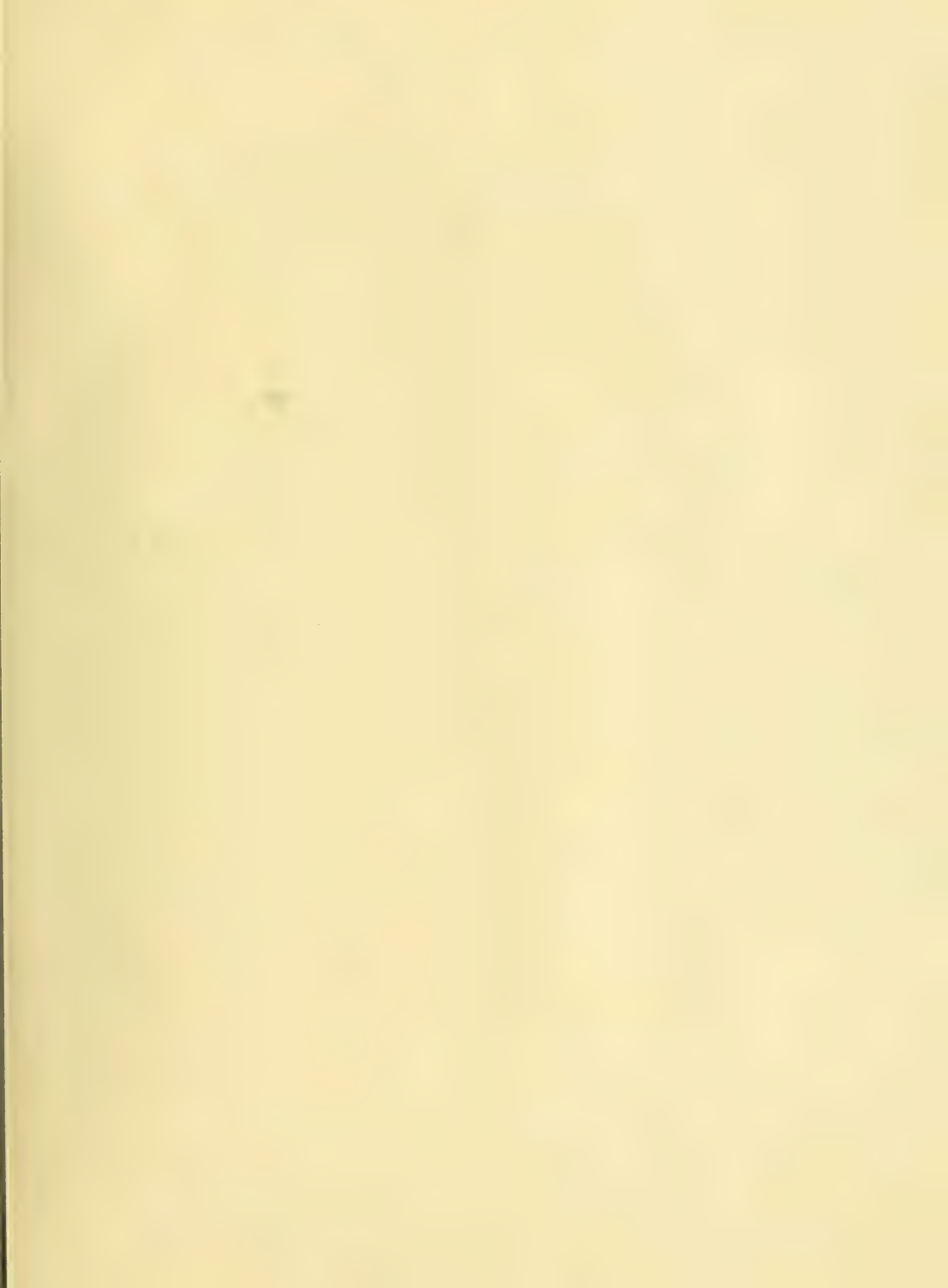
"In case of death by violence, the corpse is taken out of the ground, washed in vinegar, and after this a large fire is kindled in a pit dug on purpose, six feet long, three in width, and the same in depth.

"This fire is continually augmented until the surrounding earth becomes as hot as an oven. The remaining fire is then taken from the pit, a large quantity of wine is poured into it, and it is covered with a hurdle made of osier twigs, upon which the body is stretched out at full length. A cloth is thrown over all in the form of an arch, in order that the steam may act upon it in every direction. At the expiration of two hours this cloth is taken off, and it is asserted that if any blows have been given they will appear upon the body, in whatever state it may be. The same experiment is extended even to bones stripped of their flesh. The Chinese assure us that if the blows have been so severe as to occasion death this process causes the marks to appear upon the bones, although none of them may be broken or visibly injured."

It is not, however, wholly in the pursuit of earthly justice that such proceedings were instituted; for it is highly important that the soul of a person who has met his death by violence, shall be aided by his relatives in the duty devolving upon it of avenging the act of murder. The soul, in order to be reincarnated, must deliver up the assassin to the judges of the Infernal regions, and to assist it in this momentous work, charms and talismans must be worn, or burned, by the family, in which the deed is denounced, the weapon execrated, and the rebirth besought.

One of the illustrations included in Major Mason's volume depicts a typical street vendor, with carrying pole across one shoulder, from which swing a covered basket on the one side; and on the other, a flat, rimmed, circular board, on which are set jars of various sizes.

"Vipers," says the text, in explanation "are used medicinally in China, and are sold on the streets in baskets, alive, or, in jars and tubs, made into a broth. The shops where they are sold display a sign that consists of a long board bearing black or gilt characters upon a red ground, which denote the articles to be dispensed within, and the master's name, to which the words *Pu Hu*: 'He will not cheat you' are frequently subjoined. Sometimes the itinerant vendor carries the same sort of sign."





An Apothecary's shop, with inscribed signs and banners, as well as "Huang Tze."

By this time the reader will have become so familiar with the classification of Chinese shop signs as to have immediately placed the one just described among the *tiao pai*, mentioned in an early chapter, where medicine shops were seen to figure as "Increasing Riches," or, as the "Temple of the Happy Mean"; while an eye doctor maintained the "Most Pleasant Hall," and his competitor called himself the "Half-Awakened." It is superfluous to mention that the doctor's sign, similarly, would be a character-bearing board.

#### THE APOTHECARY'S SHOP.

We must now, however, proceed with our tour of the region of the more picturesque devices, through which ancient China reveals herself to the twentieth century eye.

Our first emblem, No. 94, is the apothecary's sign—one that is seen oftener, perhaps, than any other in Peking. In its component parts, it is easily one of the most interesting. It represents one of the Chinese panaceas, and its explanation is this:

Stowed away in a compartment within the shop are heaps of white cotton cloths, cut square, and neatly folded across, on the diagonal. A purchaser enters, asks for a particular plaster, and is given it, in the form of a hard cake that has to be warmed for spreading. With this he receives a square of the cloth, the centre of which he will, on reaching home, cover with a more or less rounded portion of the melted salve, and then wrap the whole around the affected part. These items, as the reader will now perceive, compose the apothecary's sign. The central square represents the cloth, unfolded, and with the ointment spread, ready for use. Above and below it, the diagonally folded cloth is indicated. There can surely be no two opinions as to the superior usefulness of such a sign over the written one, which would have no meaning whatever to the large majority of native passers-by.

#### THE EYE DOCTOR.

In Sign No. 95 we have further evidence of the fact that in China, as in the West, the treatment of the eye is specialized in. The faint streaks of white dimly outlined against the red cords in the eye



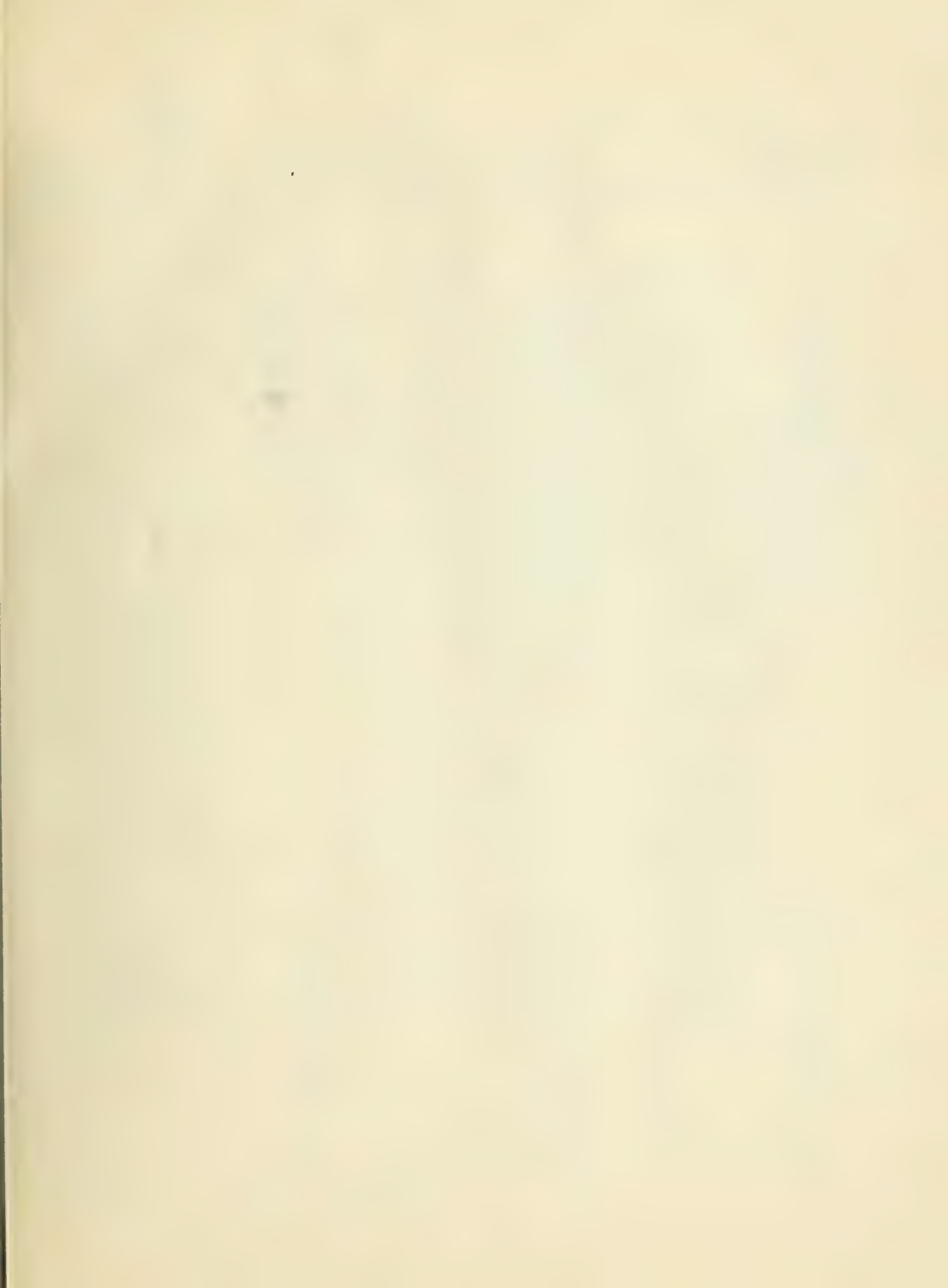
doctor's sign are meant to indicate the Chinese "dropper," which consists of a length of straw, such as the Westerner uses in taking his iced drinks. The doctor dispenses a certain white powder whose efficacy is tested, first of all, in all cases. This is probably the one made from the "Eight Precious Articles!" When it proves itself insufficient, the patient is given a prescription which he carries to the shop we have just described. Usually this document calls for a preparation made from the fritillary lily; and, in the opinion of foreign doctors, it will be equally ineffectual, eye disorders—and especially trachoma—being among the commonest maladies of the Chinese, who appear to accept blindness as one of the forms of the inevitable.

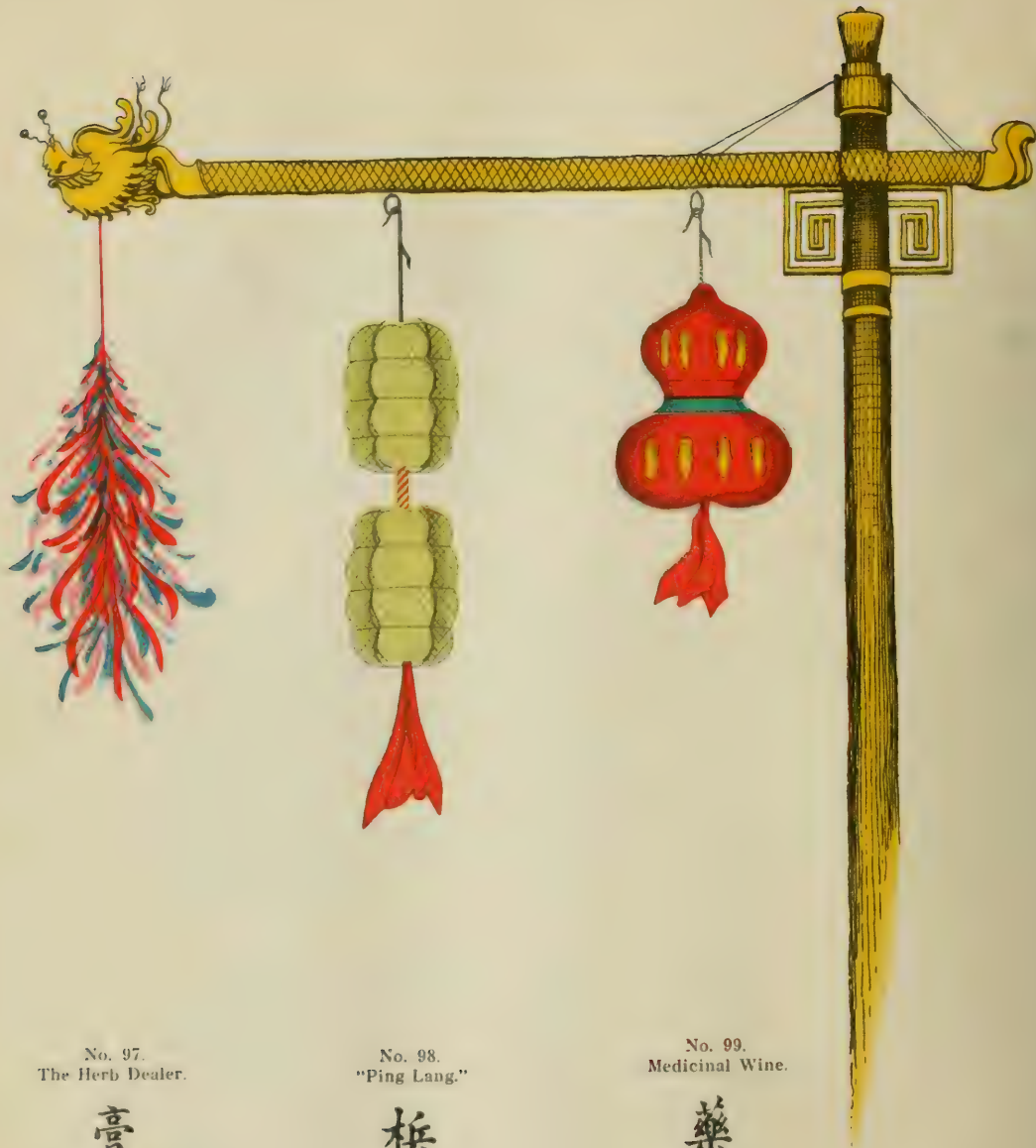
#### THE MIDWIFE.

No. 96 is the sign of a practitioner, humble, but one of the busiest—the Chinese midwife, patron of the "Garden of Perpetual Spring." Though she achieves the dignity of a character-bearing signboard, her device resembles that of the dealer in medicines made from the viper, both being square, while the "regular" practitioner's is oblong, with gold characters, on black. Nevertheless, in the more than ordinary importance attached to posterity in China, her function is a significant one. Ages ago one of the sisterhood was deified and her image, seated upon that of a crouching tiger is worshipped in the temples, where *Kuan Yin* (Mother of Mercy) is besought by the childless wife, in prayer for the blessing of maternity. The "Goddess of Midwifery" is the intercessionaire on behalf of ailing children.

#### THE DEALER IN HERBS.

No. 97, which resembles the active principle of the feather duster, is meant to represent the leaves of the plant from which the ointment or plaster is made that forms the black circle in the apothecary's sign. The herb is also made up into a lotion, and in this form, produces the stains on face or neck, which are among the familiar outward and visible features of the ordinary Chinese. The remedy in this case, is applied by means of a piece of paper, which adheres to the aching temple or throat, until the wind, or some other agency, carries it away.





No. 97.  
The Herb Dealer.

膏藥幌子

No. 98.  
"Ping Lang."

栢柳幌子

No. 99.  
Medicinal Wine.

藥酒幌子

## "PING LANG"—CHINESE BETEL.

In No. 98 we come to one of the least picturesque of our emblems; yet it is one replete with suggestiveness, connoting a succession of scenes typical of native life in the South Sea and Philippine Islands, Indo-China, and Malay. It is the sign of the dealer in *ping lang*, which is the Chinese name for an astringent extract made from parts of the Areca palm, the tree that bears the betel nut, is indigenous to the East Indies and the Philippines, and thence was introduced into China. It is now grown in Hainan and other districts of the south. Preparations made from various parts of the tree have a number of uses. In some forms it is employed for digestive affections, and is much used in cases of cholera; while the infusion is highly regarded as efficacious against malaria. Ointments and lotions are made from the bark, and in the shops where the sign is displayed, bits of the wood are sold, which the Chinese chew for its medicinal effect.

The habit of betel-nut chewing obtained a considerable hold on the Chinese half a century ago, especially in the districts where the tree is grown. The betel nut was even given a place in the social customs of the people, similar to that which it occupies among the natives of Indo-China and other countries addicted to this vice. But while the lingering remnants of its social functions are still to be observed in the vicinity of Amoy and Foochow, as will be shown in the description of a funeral procession in our next section, the habit of betel-nut chewing has practically disappeared.

This fact, in view of the very general uses of the Areca palm in all parts of China, is interesting, in the light of an article that appeared some time ago in a French periodical published in Saigon, wherein the writer expressed the regret of the French colonists of Indo-China at their failure to cure the people of Annam of this unsightly habit, which leaves its marks on walls and houses and even interior furnishings in that country—not to speak of its effect on the mouth of the habitué.

On the one hand, said the writer, the colonists had had to contend against the common belief among the natives, that the betel nut is endowed with health-promoting powers; and that, above all, it is an infallible preventive against toothache. As this malady is unknown in Annam, and as, furthermore, French physicians there have credited



the betel nut with tonic qualities demanded by climatic conditions of the most enervating kind, there would seem to be some foundation in fact for these beliefs.

As the betel is chewed in Annam, the leaf is used as a wrapper, on which is spread, first, a layer of the native pepper, then a small quantity of lime, and on this a bit of the nut. The whole is then rolled up into a ball and laid against the gums, where it is pressed and chewed. Its first effect is to redden the mouth and gums, as if they were suffused in blood. Afterward these surfaces turn black, and have a glazed look. This coating doubtless prevents erosion and explains the native's immunity from toothache.

There is some difference of opinion as to the origin of the Chinese name for the betel, which the Malays call *pinang*. *Ping lang*, the Chinese words, may also be written with the characters meaning "honoured guest," and one authority maintains this to be their correct meaning, on the ground that one of the most rigid of the national customs of Annam requires that the box of betel must be presented to a visitor, even before the hospitable cup of tea is offered; and to a casual caller, as well, though he merely knock upon the door, to make inquiry of some sort. This custom constitutes the other serious feature of the French colonists' problem. In South China, the betel nut came to figure, also, as a conciliatory offering; and the participants in a quarrel were wont to send an enwrapped section of it, the one to the other, which etiquette demanded must be accepted, perforce.

#### MEDICINAL WINE.

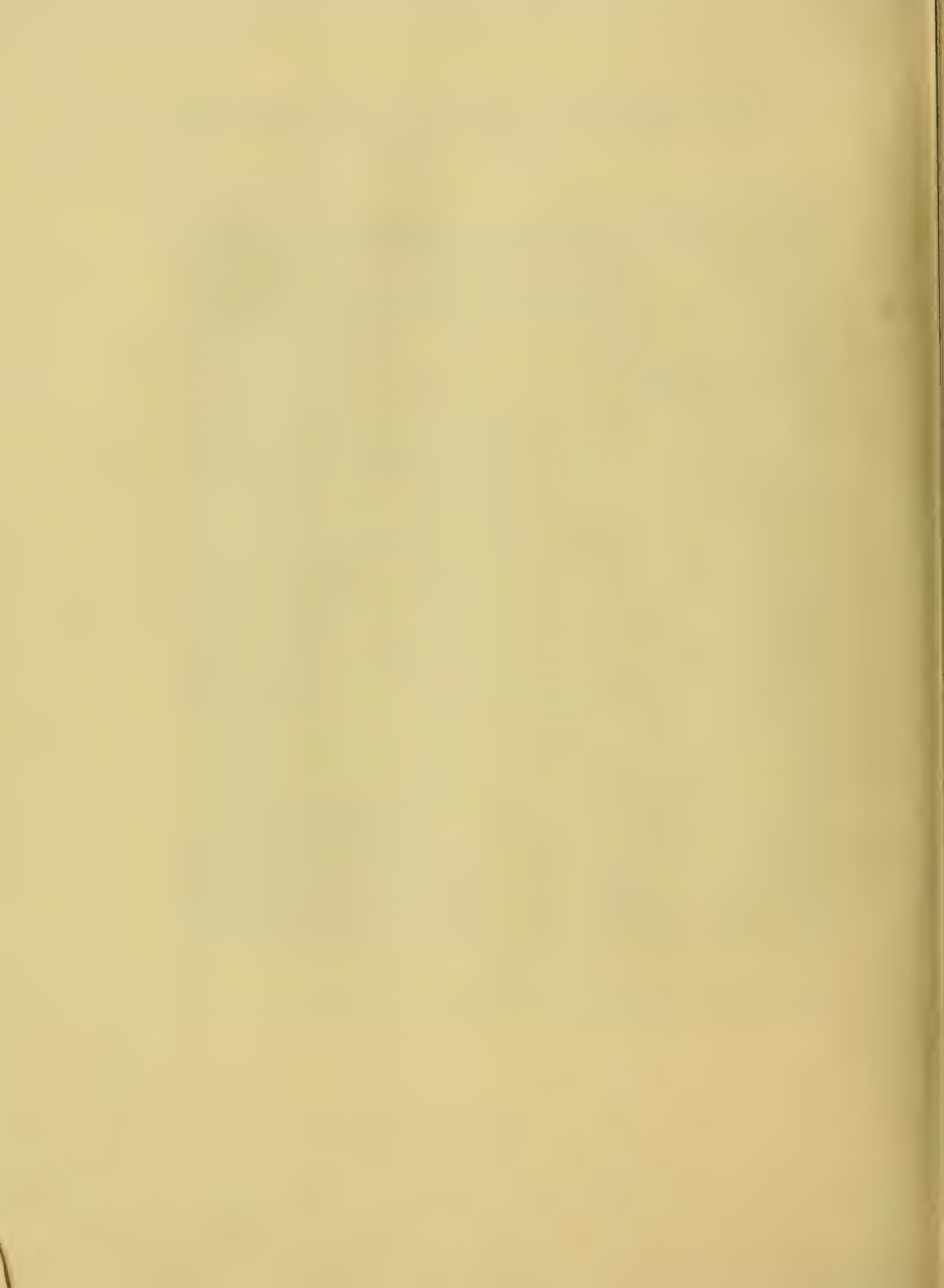
Once more, in No. 99, we encounter the Red Gourd, again the sign of a wine-dealer; but here, the calabash being slashed vertically, and banded round its middle with a stripe of green, it stands for "medicinal wine"; and in this guise attests the peculiar Chinese custom of using wine as the conveyance for the drugs prescribed. Here is the third of the important functions of Chinese wines. From the point of view of utility, it probably deserves a place at the head of the list, for while certain varieties of so-called "medicinal wines" are made from aromatic herbs, a large share of the fermented wine produced annually is devoted to medicinal purposes. The extent to which this practice tends to influence the wine-making industry may



be judged from the Customs figures for a single port—that of Canton, which in some years, imports in the neighbourhood of 800 tons of liquors, fermented and distilled, fully half of which quantity is listed as “medicated.” Most of the medicine shops are equipped with stills, and the liquors dispensed are re-distilled and much stronger than the ordinary variety. Rectification of spirits, as was to be assumed from our previous account of Chinese methods, is not provided for in the processes of manufacture.

The ginseng, “Root of Life,” to which the Chinese attribute the powers with which monkey glands and other more recent discoveries are credited in the West, is steeped in brandy, *Shao Chiu*, the fiery potency of the liquor being depended on to extract the substance of perpetual youth. It is this draught that represents the real Chinese elixir of life, whatever ancient tradition may have had to say of the properties of jade and gold, and the waters of the magic springs.

The most persistent of pursuits has ever been this quest for perennial youth, among the Chinese, whether merchant, poet, philosopher, or monk. But, by long odds, the most practical of the dreams inspired by the “root of life” are realized by the hunter, burrowing among the undergrowth in the forests of Manchuria and Siberia, with all the secrecy and persistence of the gold digger, gathering in with grunts of disapproval, the roots of mediocre size and shape, while ever on the alert for one that bears the form of a man’s body. This constitutes the ginseng-digger’s “strike,” and when he makes it the hunter hunts no more. Assuming that the gods who watch over the destinies of such as he, permit of his safe arrival at the “assayer’s,” which rarely enough they do, for such prizes usually take their toll of three or four lives, at least, before finally reaching this headquarters—he immediately packs his few belongings and makes tracks for his home town, a rich man. Perhaps, if he be wise, and courageous enough to chance it, he will carry his fortune in its original form, to some city like Shanghai, where it would yield him an infinitely greater sum—especially if he have it “mounted” in a glass-topped box, lined in red velvet, as these precious objects are customarily exhibited.

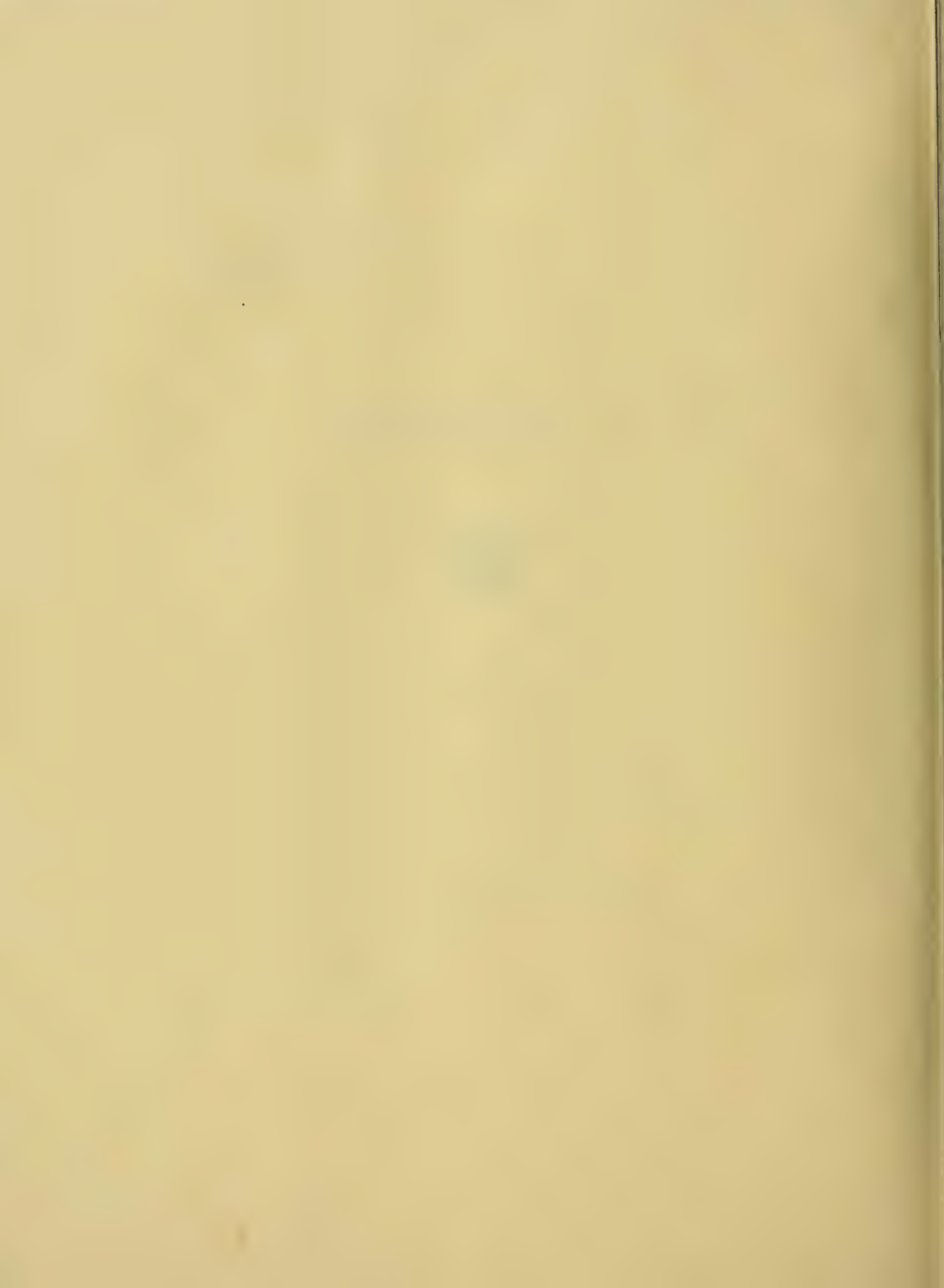


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HIS FUTURE STATE

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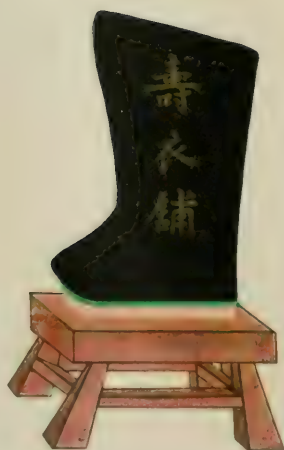
No. 100.  
Paper Images.

冥衣鋪幌子



No. 101.  
Portraits of the Dead.

影像鋪幌子



No. 102.  
Burial Robes.

壽衣鋪幌子

## Chapter Twelve:

### *The Paraphernalia of Departure.*

Green, green,  
The cypress on the mound.  
Firm, firm,  
The boulder in the stream.  
Man's life lived within this world,  
Is like the sojourning of a hurried traveller.  
A cup of wine together will make us glad,  
And a little friendship is no little matter.

*From one of the Nineteen Pieces of Old Poetry.  
Attributed to MEI SHENG, First Century B.C.<sup>80</sup>*



IN the fine, detached philosophy that characterizes the poetry of the Chinese, and is reflected in these stately lines, there is little to suggest the actual attitude of a nation toward life and death. In fact, when judged from the everyday practices of the people, popular beliefs in China seem to depart noticeably from the ideals enunciated by poet and philosopher—as is the case, it may be remarked, with human documents generally.

The explanation, as regards the Chinese at all events, is not far to seek—whether one be considering the folk of Mei Sheng's time or the present. With all due allowance for the prevailing illiteracy and the barrier which, in China, separates the written from the spoken language, it may be doubted if abstract reasoning and lofty sentiment would have found any considerable place in the thoughts of the great majority of the people. To them, man's life was "lived within this world" in the strictest adherence to forms, and he may be supposed to have been sufficiently engrossed with the rites and ceremonies

prescribed by ancient custom or religion for the discharge of the ever-present duty of the individual toward his rulers, his elders, his family, and toward countless generations of his departed. Hence, from his point of view, the most important function of the scholar consisted in the transmission of this complicated system of procedure, as variously interpreted by successive dynasties.

One is, however, scarcely prepared to find the ancient proverbs of the Chinese pervaded by the same atmosphere of aloofness from the evident preoccupations of the people. And it is interesting to observe the doctrine of death as a happy release for the soul figuring largely in these so-called "homely truths," while sights and sounds on every hand are vigorously proclaiming a very different conviction.

"Though a man live a hundred years, still he must die; and *the sooner we die the sooner we have done with the body*," complacently remarks one of the old adages, in a spirit that mildly belittles not only the universal pursuit of "long life," but a highly significant fact relating to the body. For the veriest tyro in matters Chinese knows that the great concern and honour shown toward the body and its last resting-place is inspired by the belief that the fate of the deceased is largely determined thereby, and that the release of the soul from eternal torment is not to be encompassed without these dutiful attentions. The same applies to the latter half of this, from which we learn that:

"Man's life on earth resembles a spring dream; *when once the soul has fled, all is over.*"

Actually, of course, the most important of all duties remains to be done "when once the soul has fled," since in its presumably unstable state it is seriously considering a return to the body. But indeed, in almost any aspect of family life among the Chinese, one looks in vain for reflections of the calm philosophy, which, incidentally, would deprive us of the material for our next sections, and according to which: "Man's life is like a candle in the wind, or hoar-frost on the tiles," for "men live like birds in a wood together; but when the set time comes each takes his flight," and "who knows whether the bonze or his wooden fish<sup>31</sup> will last the longer?"

Now and then, one of the adages appears to take special aim at some specific institution; as this, that seems strangely out of keeping with a socio-religious system based on ancestor worship: "As the

scream of the eagle is heard when she has passed over, so a man's name remains after his death," it declares, thereby apparently ignoring the universal spirit of reverence of which soul tablets and household shrines, and, in fact, the major portion of temple worship are the visible and eloquent marks.

But it is surely the climax of daring and revolutionary expressions that is achieved in the following: "Don't distress yourself for the dead." Literally: "Let the dead care for the dead, and the living for the living."

If ever there has been a time in Chinese history when such a dangerous course would have failed to invite not only earthly disgrace, but the direst of punishments in the life to come, we do not read aright the precise formulæ by which filial regard must manifest itself, both during the life and after the death of parents and relatives.

The fact of the matter is, that, despite all this atmosphere of resignation in poem and proverb, there are few countries in the world where "the change called 'death'" is more greatly dreaded than it is in China, where, indeed, the very word itself must never be uttered. Somewhat suggestive of the Indian superstition of the Evil Eye, to which danger a child is exposed by a spoken word of praise, the Chinese idea involved in the inhibition is that all sorts of pernicious influences are associated with death, and that these are attracted by the sound of this ominous word, or even by the thought of a parent's, or a friend's demise in these terms. Thus, as we shall see, material measures are provided for the protection of those taking part in any of the ceremonies connected with the journey to another sphere; and meantime, one safeguards oneself and all concerned by referring to the "summons to join the innumerable caravan" as the "consummation of life," or, as "paying the debt of nature,"—particularly in the case of the aged. Of these, one also says, in the case of a man, that "he has completed his term of life in the chief resting-place"; and of a woman, that she has fulfilled hers in the "inner" resting-place—phrases that seem to express a characteristic of native thought far better than the proverbs, in that they convey something of that impersonal respect, aside from the sentiments inspired by direct relationship, which is bestowed upon the old, in recognition of the achievement of the ideal of every Chinaman, viz., a "long life." In fact, old age has been invested with authority and its attendant



responsibilities since the early days of the Chou dynasty, when, says Li Ung Bing, "old age was supreme in the village, as was the king in the state, and the father in the family."

Into the composition of the phrases which take the place of the word "death," there enters the character *shou*, which belongs to the language of ceremony and etiquette, and which may be broadly translated as signifying "longevity." This ideograph, with the various additions giving it specific meaning, figures in the Chinese-English dictionaries with something like fifty definitions, fully half of which have to do with birthday observances. The rest deal with death—except for three or four, and among these is the *prunus persicana*, symbol of happiness!

When the inquiry as to a person's age is expressed in terms of formality and elegance, it is the character *shou* that forms the basis and gives distinction to the question which, above all others the Chinese delight in asking, though not from the motive that might be supposed to inspire it. For while appearing to be swayed by a strange desire to credit the questioned with a greater number of years than he may be prepared to confess to, the Chinese inquirer is actually, from his point of view, offering a delicate compliment. In other words, he is pretending to believe that the former has attained to rather more of the coveted longevity than may be the case, very much as the Westerner addresses an army officer by a title he has not yet achieved.

#### "SHOU I"—BURIAL CLOTHES.

In one of the *shou* combinations the compound signifies a coffin, the wood from which these receptacles are made being referred to as "longevity boards." Another of the compounds, *Shou I* denotes a burial robe, or "longevity garment," and in this guise it appears in Sign No. 102, among the last of our illustrations, and the only one on which a character of this class is shown.

This wooden object represents the officer's boot, which, as an item of burial dress, passed out of general use with the fall of the imperial system. It is seldom of a quality of workmanship corresponding to the dignity of the characters it bears, but in point of numbers it outdistances even the apothecaries' signs in Peking. It is, however, only



a token coin, as it were; for the shop is a storehouse of grave clothes of all kinds. On the multiplicity achieved by these, in some instances, especially under the Empire, we shall have occasion to remark later.

To this shop repairs, let us say, the eldest son about to be bereft of a parent, when the illness gives undoubted evidence of being mortal. Generally speaking, this latter point is highly important, as any appearance of prematurity would be regarded as most unseemly. However, like most things having to do with human affairs, it is a detail governed largely by circumstances and individual temperament. Usually, the knowledge of the visit must be withheld from the dying, and the clothing not brought into the house until actually needed. On the other hand, quite a contrary procedure may be followed when conditions are of the most auspicious—happiness, from the point of view of the aged, in China, being expressed in terms of large families of sons, who, in their turn are blest with a numerous male progeny. And when an old man is surrounded by these evidences of a well-spent life, death truly is robbed of its victory and the grave of its sting—as would be the case in any country that provided, for the realization of this ideal, the convenient, and from this point of view, eminently practical system of concubinage.

In imperial times, if we are taking a hypothetical case of a dying parent, the patrons of such a shop as this would not have been of the well-to-do class, though one is told that in these republican days, they are coming to be more and more generally used. In the main, however, the time of departure on the long journey finds the aged already prepared in the possession of the principal outer robes, in which would be included the much-prized "longevity garment" of dark blue, covered all over in "long-life" symbols, embroidered in gold thread. Such robes would have been presented by dutiful children years back; and, worn with pride and delight at a succession of birthday celebrations, they would have elicited the enthusiasm and congratulations of friends and acquaintances. Because of the division of time into sixty-year cycles, the sixtieth birthday is the occasion of special rejoicing, and corresponds in significance, with the hundredth anniversary in the West. Women were and are buried in their wedding robes; and both husband and wife use, also, the undergarment made for and worn only on the wedding-day and the one following, after which it is stored away for this final purpose.

The official classes "appeared before their ancestors," as the Chinese express the translation to the Beyond, arrayed in the full regalia of rank, such as had been worn at Court. Nothing, however, prevented the son of a father (or mother) who had enjoyed no sort of rank or position whatsoever, from arraying his loved one in the garments pertaining thereto; and to the very limit of his means, he strove to repair the deficiencies of an obscure and hard-working existence, by investing its representatives with the outward forms of official dignity and circumstance to which they had not been entitled on earth, but which would surely gain for them a better standing in the next world. At the same time, the filial piety thus displayed, at whatever cost, could be counted on to enlist the future good offices of the departed in behalf of their descendants who might thus achieve prosperity, especially of the sort that represents the Chinese ideal of earthly well-being—viz., lucrative positions under the Government. This peculiar custom accounts for the incongruity between resplendent costumes and peasant faces in so many of the so-called "family portrait" scrolls collected by tourists, and later exhibited at home as types of the Chinese mandarin of the first, second, third, or whatever class is indicated by the hat, neckchain, and the embroidered device on the front of the pictured robe.

#### PORTRAITS OF THE DEAD.

Somewhat of this nature is the portrait shown in Sign No. 101. This is the framed bust likeness that figures in the funeral rites. Such pictures are hung up, in the place of honour, against the white cloth that screens off the enclosure where its original lies. A table is set in front of it, with brazier, candles and incense sticks; and on the floor is laid a white mat. Here the devoirs of family, relatives and friends are made. Later the picture is carried in a sedan chair, as part of the funeral procession, as we shall see.

In the portrait will be noted the hat of the mandarin of first rank, with plume extending down the back, and insignia on top, which we have already encountered in Sign No. 33. The artist keeps a stock of these "portraits" on hand, with all details painted in except the face, which may not be added while a single spark of life remains, as there is a superstition involved in this. Hence his studies are made from

the defunct, and his success is measured by his ability to produce a faithful likeness, for on this point the Chinese are insistent. It is possible that another consideration entering into the provisional preparation of these "dead men's pictures" is the fact that under the Empire, the marks of spurious rank bestowed upon the dead, partook somewhat of the nature of counterfeit. The choice of costume automatically decided the class of the portrait, and it goes without saying that the artist's "sitters" to-day are not "arrayed like one of these" in the sign.

People of means and position in China maintain a gallery of family portraits; but that of the recently deceased may not be added thereto until after the conclusion of the burial rites. Whether the house be large enough to provide the hall of honour where these ceremonies are conducted, or whether a temporary shelter is erected in the courtyard, the portrait hangs, throughout this period, against the white cloth screen.

While the drastic change from monarchy to republic did not—especially among country people—at once affect long established custom as regards this item of burial ceremony, it is doubtful if to-day the male dead are ever sent to "meet their ancestors" in embroidered robes. Women married according to old school custom—which is to say the great majority—will continue, of course, so to appear on high. The use of the wedding garments as burial robes appears to have had no other significance than the motives of economy and convenience, and it may be that these considerations still obtain in many instances among aged men, whose wardrobes still contain some of the relics of imperial days.

At all events, neither shopkeeper nor artist have felt themselves under the slightest obligation to amend their *huang tzes* to accord with changing customs. The deceased coolie, whose son has prospered and risen in the world, is now laid to rest in a plain-coloured silken robe, and the short overjacket of black that proclaims the gentleman, topped with a satin skull-cap, and finished with the prevailing mode in shoes. In the majority of instances, of course, the long robe, when achieved, would represent the united contributions of many pairs of work-worn hands. In any case, nobody has the slightest use for the high boots—but what matter? As shop signs they bear the characters, *Shou I*, and therefore all requirements are met.



## PAPER IMAGES.

The shop where Sign No. 100 is displayed is that of the maker of the paper images, sedan chairs, miniature houses, trunks, ingots of money, and all the other articles which the dear departed will need in the life to which he has just been transported, and which are reproduced in the regions beyond by the mere burning of their effigies here below. This is a feature much emphasized in the Peking funeral procession with which many readers will be familiar; but that these customs varied somewhat in different parts of China will be apparent from the description of a funeral procession in South China, which will be given later.

The characters on the signboard announce that the artisan also pursues the trade of paper hanger. ("Hanging," by the way, is scarcely the word to apply to this operation in China, where wall-paper is not produced in rolls, but in sheets a couple of feet in width and about double the length, these being applied horizontally.) The red background emphasizes his connection with the paraphernalia for future existence.

This use at funerals of the colour that has been interpreted as standing for happiness, since it tints the birthday and New Year cards, as well as the banners and scrolls and whatnot that surround the bride and groom on their momentous journey across the "Silver Stream," has already been explained as being in no sense an exhibition of some mysterious cross-current in Chinese thought. Since red signifies "consummation," "fulfilment," besides being possessed of the power of dispelling evil influences, it is eminently appropriate to birth, death and all the intermediate phases of human existence.

It is interesting to observe its use even at the most ultra-modern weddings to-day, though the young iconoclast grows more and more eloquent in his professed scorn for the fine points of ancient forms which set the hallmark of elegance on any social gathering conducted according to native custom. Nevertheless, at his wedding, established usage continues to be represented in the red settings and in the presence of the traditional go-between, though it is understood that the ceremony takes place not as the result of parental arrangement, but by individual choice of the parties concerned. Among this class of young folk, the bridal chair is replaced by the motor car; but even

this vehicle, both as to exterior and interior, conforms to the required fiery hue. The *k'o-tow*, however, has been eliminated in favour of the bow—reduced to the simplest character and smallest number possible—on the ground that the former reverential acknowledgment to forebears had been devised before the use of chairs, when it had been less of an ordeal than it afterward became.

It is true that the influence of this small minority has not yet produced much effect outside its own immediate circle; but nevertheless it has begun to look as if modern tendencies boded no good to time-honoured precedent—not necessarily, be it said, in favour of something better, but as if the very word "tradition" had become an irritant to Young China. And thus one asks oneself: What next? Will ancestor worship, and filial duty, as applied to the decease of parents, follow the *k'o-tow* into the limbo of meaningless, and therefore troublesome impedimenta of a new civilization? Certainly thus far, the "new" can lay claim to little distinction on the ground of outward grace, beauty and dignity, as compared with the old—whatever may be its recommendations on the score of an attempted reproduction of Western mannerisms.

However, despite these attacks on certain elements of family law, the social structure of a country may still be considered safe enough, so long as government-by-family creates the force that enables the chariot of state to move along as equably without a president as ever it has done under one of these chiefs. But the dissociation of the Chinese nation from the traditions of ancestor worship is a thought much more difficult to grasp, in view of the fact that since the very beginning of things, filial piety and the honour shown to the dead, so strongly emphasized in the Confucian teachings, had been the only form of worship permitted to the common people, until the advent of Buddhism. The worship of God previously had been the sole privilege of the Son of Heaven, while the lesser divinities were approachable only by the nobles. In fact, "no word for religion was known to the language, and the notion of church or temple had not entered men's minds"<sup>32</sup> until the popularization of the Indian faith was effected in the fifth century by the construction of temples, pagodas, and monasteries, and the creation of the priestly caste. Thereupon, also, funeral rites began to take on the form by which they have come to be known.



Thus it is probable that China's various modernist movements are meditating no attack on this form of filial duty. Prophecy, however, is difficult in the *mêlée* of new and old forms, with student revolts directed, apparently, at authority in general, and anti-christian movements, said to be traceable to Soviet propaganda, but which are more probably allied with the sudden precipitation of national feeling, and with reports of the recent increased growth of Buddhism. The latter development inevitably would spread a protecting influence around this tremendous fundamental of national life. For it will be remembered that according to the dictum of the early revisers of the abstruse doctrines of Gautama, who produced therefrom (fourth century A.D.) what was to become Chinese Buddhism, *filial piety* stands at the head of all the virtues, Social, Ceremonial and Religious, that promise entrance into Paradise, or the Western Heaven, as Nirvana is known in China. We shall have occasion presently to observe the beneficiaries of this provision in the performance of the duties it entails; but meanwhile, the following will serve, perhaps, to give a very general idea of the rewards held out to the faithful: "Let all living beings of the ten regions of the universe maintain a confident and joyful faith in me," says the Vow of Amitahba, the Chinese Buddhist's ruling deity, who had achieved bodhisatship after having been a powerful monarch some time in the dim ages. "Let them concentrate their longings on a rebirth in Paradise," the Vow continues, "let them call upon my name, be it only ten times or less; then, provided they have not been guilty of the five heinous sins, and have not villified the true religion, the desire of such beings to be born in my Paradise will surely be fulfilled."

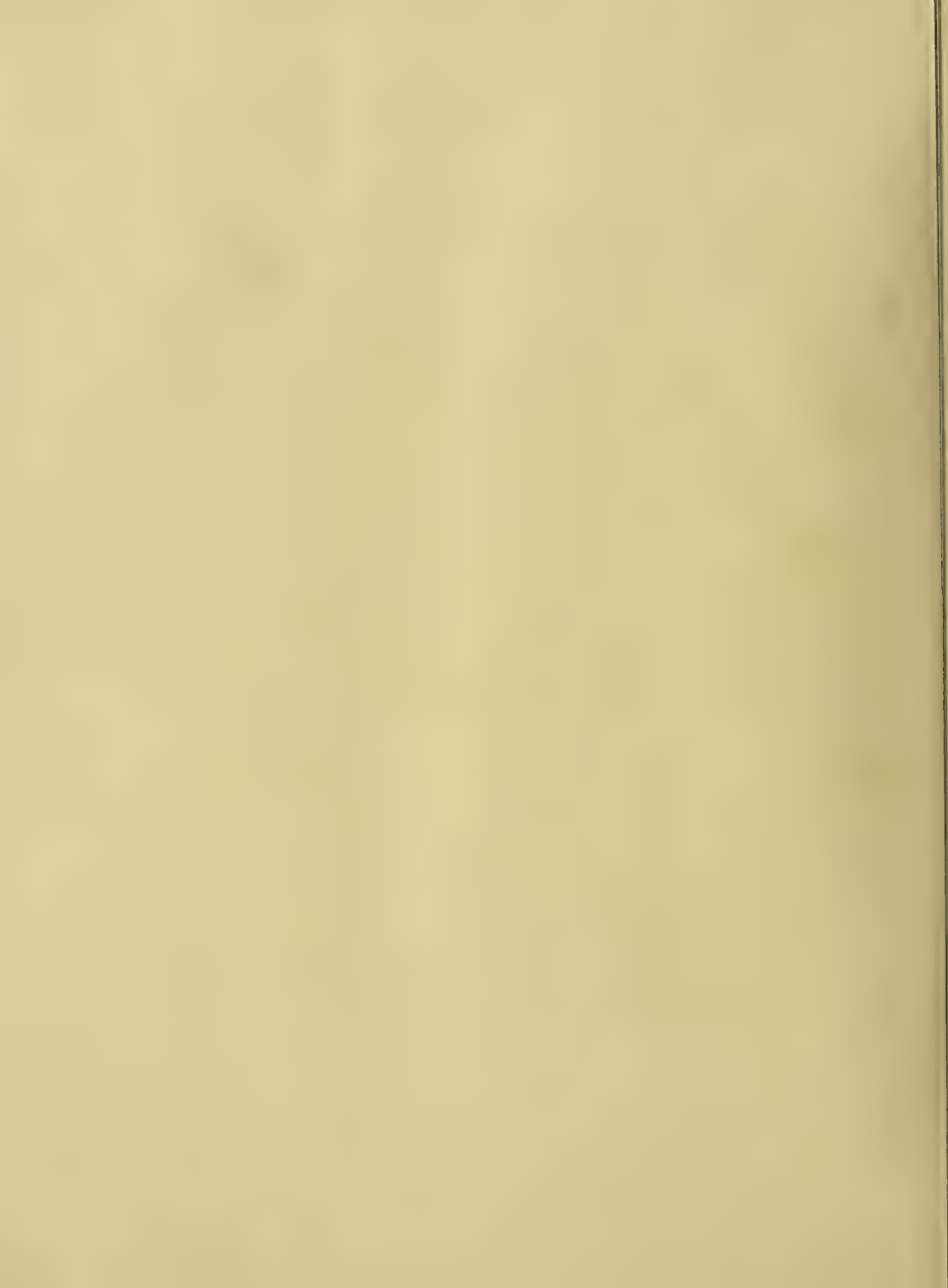
The "five heinous sins" that threatened expulsion from Paradise were enumerated in the following order: murder of a mother; of a father; of a bodhisatva; shedding the blood of a Buddha; and causing schisms in the Buddhist Church.

This "Western Heaven," the ultimate Paradise of the Chinese Buddhist, as it was interpreted by the revisers known as the "Lotus School," is described in the Vow, as a region in which "a hundred thousand vases, full of different sweet perfumes, and made of all kinds of jewels, are continually smoking with incense that rises into the sky beyond gods, men and all things; while showers of sweet jewel flowers are pouring down, and sweet-sounding music clouds are



#### THE WESTERN HEAVEN.

*The Ultimate Paradise of the Chinese Buddhist. Above are suggested the lesser "Buddha Countries," and below, the Sacred Lake of Lotuses. The Great Buddha, O-mi-to Fo (Amitahya) stands in the centre, surrounded by bodhisats, and with Kuan Yin (Avalokitesvara) on his left, and Ta Shih Chih (Mahastama) on his right.*



always playing. The fortunate dwellers in this Paradise are visible by their splendour, and are filled with pleasure beyond gods and men."

All beings born into this Pure Land, where no difference exists between gods and men, are of one colour, and that a "golden" one; and here there is no death, no descent into hell, and no "brute" (animal) creation. All are possessed of the highest miraculous powers and self-control, by reason of great strength of the body, which is "as the diamond, or thunderbolt." They are delivered from rebirth, and are possessed of the recollection of every former birth. They acquire "the divine ear and the divine eye," and become skilled in the "knowledge of the thoughts of other people."

It is this phase of Buddhism, developed from the Mahayanist doctrine of salvation by faith, which, says the *Encyclopædia Sinica*, "rightly or wrongly, is supposed to have most in common with Roman Catholic Christianity, having its purgatory, its goddess of mercy, its elaborate machinery for delivering the dead from pain and misery through the good offices of the priests, and gaining them an entrance into the Pure Land of the Western Heaven." Likewise, it has its *aureoled* saints, and its masses.

In the extreme liberality of its interpretation of the term, "salvation by faith," no punishments are eternal, and sin may be wiped out, in varying degrees of time, by the mere invocation (even if only on the deathbed) of the name of Amitahba, or "O-mi-to Fo," as he is called by the Chinese. Hence the repetition of these syllables is one of the familiar sounds that fall on the ear in all Buddhist temples. Printed forms covered in tiny circles are given out to worshippers, and with each invocation of this holy name a circle is filled in. The sheets are carefully stored away, and when the individual sets out on his journey to the Western Heaven, they are burned, together with all the other paper objects. By these means the recording divinities are prepared to recognize him on his arrival, and care for him according to his just desserts.

These latter will relegate him to one of the nine classes into which the "saved" are divided. But, first of all, the soul is received into an intermediate heaven—that of the Sacred Lake of Lotuses, whose replica is usually to be found in every temple courtyard. Some time in the course of his invocations of "O-mi-to Fo," perhaps with the very first, his own particular lotus, temporary abode of the



soul will have appeared among the other blossoms that raise their starry heads above the quiet waters; but it will carry itself stately, or droopingly, according to the measure of his devoutness on earth, for the flowers of the Sacred Lake can thrive only by the faith of those whom they represent. The symbolism of the lotus-flower is based on the sacred words of Sakyamuni (Gautama):

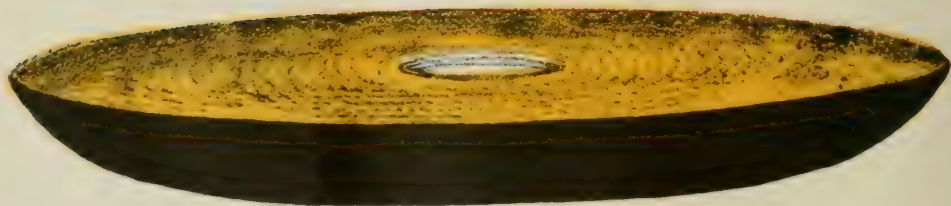
"Just as a lotus, born in water, bred in water, overcomes water and is not defiled by water, even so I, born in the world and bred in the world, have now overcome the world."

To the Sacred Lake are borne the souls of the dead guarded from the machinations of evil spirits on the journey by the benign host who become apprised of new arrivals in the manner mentioned, besides being further besought and propitiated by the sacrifices of the devoted sons and families left behind on earth. Under their ministrations the souls are enfolded in the hearts of the flowers; and thus, resposing on the placid bosom of the Lake, they await the summons to the higher regions. Ages, nay aeons may elapse before the appointed time for the "opening of their lotus-flowers" shall have come, especially for those guilty of one of the five heinous sins, who may however, secure entrance to this region by calling on the name of Amitahba, "be it only ten times, or less."

"But he who is assigned to the highest class," says R. F. Johnston, in *Buddhist China* (and we have seen that these would be the filial sons) "will enter into the joys of the Western Heaven immediately after death, for his lotus-flower will open out as soon as he has been reborn in the sacred lake, and he will therefore 'see Buddha's form and body with every sign of perfection complete, and also the perfect forms and signs of all the bodhisats.' . . . He who belongs to one of the inferior classes will be carried no less speedily to the lake of lotuses, but his own lotus will not unfold immediately, and until it unfold he will be excluded from the radiant light that streams from the glorious Amitahba . . . The state of those who lie imprisoned within the closed calixes of their lotuses may be regarded as a kind of painless purgatory. They are in heaven, and yet not of it . . ."







#### THE GEOMANCER'S COMPASS.

The accuracy and authenticity of the instrument is unquestioned when the "chop" of its maker, stamped on the reverse side, shows it to have emanated from the town of Huweichow, in Anhwei province, where the art of its construction has been handed down from father to son for a period, according to tradition, that leads back to the dim ages.

## Chapter Thirteen:

### When Nature Claims Her Due.

"The ancients see not the modern moon; but the modern moon shone on the ancients."—*Chinese Proverb.*

#### BURIAL RITES.



WHEN the civilization of China is viewed in the long perspective and with due regard for the extraordinary power wielded by precedent, it seems to unfold itself like a gigantic roll of tapestry whose pattern had been devised by some prehistoric race of "ancients." For no matter how old the book on ceremonial one may happen to select, the impression it conveys is that of an already old-established order. The standard works on the etiquette of procedure, known as the *Three Li*—the *I Li*, the *Chou Li*, or *Chou Dynasty Ceremonial*, and the *Li Ki*—while dating back at least to the Three Early Dynasties (Hsia, Shang and Chou 2205–255 B.C.), are derived actually from the still more ancient heritage of *Li*, or *Ritual*. The latter, again, conducts backward another two thousand years, to the days when the race now known as the Chinese arrived from northwest Asia (presumably) and settled in the Yellow River Basin. Their first attempt at social organization consisted of the "Hundred Families," into which register they had not at first



admitted the aborigines (of whom the Miaos of Kansu province are believed to be the last relics). These subject races were governed by a Penal Code, called *Hsing*, and the settlers by *Li*, which latter, says Li Ung Bing, "teaches a man what he is expected to do; while *Hsing* tells him what he is expected not to do." Under the Chous, the superiority of the instructive over the prohibitive was advocated and greatly stressed by Confucius, who maintained that among men properly taught prohibitions are uncalled for. Subsequently, however, while *Li*, continued to rule, in some form or other, until the Manchus introduced their own system of procedure, the adoption of Buddhism as the state religion, in A.D. 67 began to exert an influence over the phase of native customs that concerns us here; and by the fifth century, funeral rites had more or less assumed the form maintained ever since.

The rules of procedure prescribed by the highly elaborated *Li* had not, of course, been intended for the use of the common people—in fact, the *Li Ki* frankly so states. But it was inevitable that they should exert a determining influence on popular customs. Moreover, the dividing lines between the various so-called castes were not easily drawn in a social system like that of the Celestial Empire. Under the Chings, for example, the rank of the great diminished with succeeding generations, as from Prince to Duke, and thence to Lord, or Commander,<sup>33</sup> which was the end. On the other hand, since the accession of the Manchus did not affect the ages-old operation of Chinese family law, nor the system of classical examinations, which they wisely enough conserved, this descending movement was met by the upward trend that enabled the poor man to become a rich one, since an unwritten law of family devotion led to the selection of one member to whose education and advancement the others made matter-of-course sacrifice. In this, to be sure, the latter were by no means disinterested, inasmuch as they were due to benefit, in some measure, if one of their number achieved the prestige surrounding the scholar which attainment promised the opening up of all manner of opportunities to those who successfully passed the examinations. Thus it happens that the biographies of Chinese poets and philosophers include such records of public service as were mentioned in connection with the poet Po Chu I.<sup>34</sup>

In short, for the purpose of obtaining a general impression of

funeral customs among the Chinese, to which end rules are more interesting in the observance than in the breach, we have only to reflect, now and then, in the course of our survey, that thousands—perhaps millions—were prevented by circumstances, from strict adherence to forms. Yet, even these, being driven to making shift as best they might, have ever sought the nearest possible imitation of their superiors. For the wealthy, outside of official circles, who might otherwise have been cut off from the precedents established by ruling dynasties, there was the charming provision that enabled them to “appear before their ancestors” with the mark of imperial favour in the form of an official degree, purchased for this purpose.

To anyone disposed to delve deeply into this fascinating subject, Dr. J. J. M. de Groot’s monumental work, entitled *The Religious Systems of China*, is to be recommended as a most entertaining and comprehensive treasury of data. In the main, the procedures therein described as current at the time of the publication of the books, in 1892, are within the experience of the traveller of to-day since the fundamentals of Chinese funeral customs maintain themselves independently of political changes, by reason of their foundation on religious belief.

Much of the material for our succeeding pages has been gathered from this valuable storehouse, in which the prevailing atmosphere is that of South China, and particularly of Amoy, where most of the author’s personal observations were made. Readers familiar with northern customs, however, will have no difficulty in identifying the principal elements of the splendid funeral processions still to be viewed in Peking, and other large cities, from the description of those typical of Amoy. Furthermore, the means of comparison thus provided will, perhaps, be not unwelcome, as establishing the fact that these spectacles differ from one another only in minor details. Voluminous notes on the points of similarity between Chinese and ancient European customs, we are obliged to pass over, leaving it to the reader to discern such as may occur to him in the course of our bird’s eye view.

As to the imperial trappings with which the subject of these gorgeous displays is clothed, a word will suffice to remove a possible suggestion of anachronism. The span of life of the new republic, it will be recalled, is but little more than a decade; and while the



ranks of the great who served under the Empire have not been seriously depleted, the obsequies of such of them as have gone to meet their ancestors recently, have been conducted in the strictest of regard for ancient custom—of which many a tourist has the good fortune to be well aware.

#### THE CONSUMMATION OF LIFE.

The natural human desire to be present at the last illness of a near relative is somewhat emphasized in China, by the duties devolving upon the eldest son; and sooner than run the risk of having to depute these willing services to others, it is a common occurrence among the Chinese, for the sons of aging fathers to set their faces against the chances of advancement in life, when these would entail residence in some distant spot. Material prosperity is considered a poor compensation for the absence of the first-born from the bedside of a dying parent.

Perhaps it is largely because of the din created by the "musical" instruments that announce to the world outside, the coming dissolution of earthly bonds—and at the same time have the strange effect of spreading balm o'er the spirit of the afflicted—that the foreign mind finds the approach of the inevitable invested with more than average lugubriousness in China, in spite of the manifold evidences of filial devotion. But having taken note of the latter, nothing seems more strange than the peculiar custom in accordance with which the dying is not permitted to breathe his last in his own bed; wherefore he departs this life lying on the three-board body rest, called the "water-bed," on which, subsequently, his body will be washed and prepared for burial.

This, surely, is an exhibition of Spartanism—but the absence of "nerves" in the Chinese has been commented upon frequently enough. It is in line, also, with a common spectacle encountered on the streets, when one sees a fainting or injured person hauled to his feet, amid shouts of forced laughter, in the evident belief that if consciousness is ever to return, the helpless body must be pummelled and shaken into an attempt at walking.

Before the ceremony of removal to the "water-bed" takes place—in fact, from the time when the illness has shown signs of being

serious—the red paper legends usually affixed about the entrance of a Chinese house, have been covered over with other bits of paper, 'usually black, as the former will have been placed there on some festival occasion, and are therefore unseemly to exhibit at such a time.

The water-bed occupies the principal apartment, just behind the main entrance, where the household shrine and ancestral tablets stand ordinarily. During this period they are covered with a cloth, or removed altogether, as the spectacle of death is believed to be unpleasant to the sacred ones. In this place of honour the family senior, let us say, is laid. His head is turned toward the left, supposedly the east, according to the rules observed in the construction of Chinese houses.

Until "death has reached the point of his eyebrows," as the Chinese express the moment of dissolution, the sorrowing family must restrain its grief, so far as its comparatively audible expression is concerned; but the instant all doubt has actually been removed, there rises the "death howl," which is really a chant of reproach addressed to the dead, the words and slow-measured cadence being prescribed by formula. "My father, can you allow yourself to go and leave me behind not yet grown a man!" wails the son; and the wife: "My husband, how can you allow yourself to go! The dark regions will harm you!" And so on.

When eyes and mouth are not closed of themselves, it is taken to mean that the dear one has departed with uneasy mind; and then, with added sorrow, wife and son proceed to comfort and reassure him on this point—and presently deal with the condition as is done in the West. Next, all near relatives assume the sackcloth garments of mourning. These are of the sort made of coarse hemp, and used only during the funeral rites. When they are not prepared at home, as they usually are in wealthy families, they may be hired from the "shops of wind-instruments and drums," which also provide the devil-exterminators, whose concert will have been in progress, meanwhile, for as long a time back, as the means of the family permit. Sons and grandsons must now unbraid their hair if the queue is worn, but in any case, the hair must remain dishevelled until the burial rites are over; though women are required only to lay aside their hair ornaments. (It is, of course, unnecessary to repeat here that the queue is still a very common sight in China—among the lower classes, generally, though the attachés of the "Court" of the young

Emperor, naturally had not discarded it).

All furniture and pictures are now removed from this part of the house, and the whole premises swept and cleaned, in preparation for the visits of condolence; and in order to exclude undesirable influences pieces of red cloth are affixed to the lintels of doors and windows. While these preparations have been going on, the sons and grandsons have left the house in a body; and walking silently, and with mournfully drooped heads, they repair to the nearest well, preceded by the eldest carrying a bucket. After solemnly filling the measure, a few coppers are thrown into the well, to pay its guardian spirit. The operation is called "buying the water." The little procession now returns to the home, those in the rear having kept up a continual chanting of the dirges.

The actual washing of the body is done by some inmate of the household—or a hireling, when the disease has been of a contagious nature—the hand being passed under the clothing, which is not removed till afterward. Sometimes the head is washed with a preparation of rice or millet-water, which was one of the rites laid down in the *I Li*. According to this provision, in the case of an officer's death, a pit was dug in the courtyard, and a furnace fed by fuel consisting of stubble from the ancestral temple, was contrived for the purpose of preparing the head wash. Under the Chou dynasty, millet-wine and other fragrant spirits were used in this ceremony.

Immediately the object of all this tender solicitude had breathed his last, there had been placed at his feet, a lighted candle, or, in the case of the very poor, a bowl with a wick floating in oil. The Chinese significance of the lighted candle is interesting, for into the custom enters again the *Yin-Yang* principle—in this connection, *Yin* being darkness, cold, death; and *Yang*, light, warmth, life. Souls, as we have learned, are composed of *Yang*, but being newly disembodied, they require strengthening; and the candlelight, representing *Yang*, contributes the necessary elements. It serves also to guide the soul, which hovers about the body in a state of indecision, for some time after death; all sacrifices, food, incense sticks, and above all, the wailing of the bereft, being designed to induce the return to the body.

Two small paper effigies, called "feet slaves" are also placed by the water-bed, on the theory that the soul will require servants in



the next world. Afterward, these are laid on the feet, in the coffin. On the conclusion of the washing rite, the sons, in their sackcloth garments, leave the house again, to kneel down in front of neighbouring houses and "beg for ashes," making in each case a gift of two candles. Later, the ashes will be spread over the bottom of the coffin, they being a symbol of prosperity, since "where there is no fire no food can be cooked." This begging for ashes is said to be a survival from ancient times, when mourners were accustomed to fast throughout the period of the burial rites. Usage also requires that as long as the body is uncoffined close relatives must sleep on straw, or mats, on the floor beside the loved one.

Into the hall, now empty save for the water-bed (screened off in white, the colour of mourning) condoling visitors are introduced, and the paper money they bring is burned, either on the floor or in a small portable furnace set in front of the bier. Outside the entrance a paper sedan chair is set—the "palanquin to cross the country"—with either two or four paper bearers. In case, however, the soul may wish to return to the body, food is now placed beside the latter, and sometimes into the mouth. Before taking their usual breakfast, the family kneel down beside the departed, holding incense sticks between their fingers, wailing for a few minutes, and also burning some paper money, the while the bowls of rice and vegetables stand waiting on the table at the bedside. After an interval during which the dead is supposed to satisfy himself, they eat the food, having first seen a bowl of rice and some dainties set out for the Divinity of the Soil; and in order that he may linger as long as possible over the meal, only one chopstick has been laid beside this offering.

When a visitor is announced the mourners retire to a side apartment, and the former kneels in front of the curtain, lays his forehead to the ground, and wails in concert with them. Then the principal mourner appears, silently prostrates himself before the visitor, and knocks his head against the floor three times, in thanks. The guest then speaks a few words of consolation, and makes his present of paper money, in return for which he is given a small skein of thin red cords of silk, a piece of white linen, and another of red silk or cotton. The red and white cloths he will wind round his head in the funeral procession, red for protection against evil, and white in token of death. The red threads are at once defensively fastened

to the lapel of his coat. He may, as well, have taken the precaution to further protect himself by wearing a few sprigs of garlic under his coat. Always, when the guest leaves, his chair, carriage or ricksha hire must be paid by the family. Women visitors sometimes remain to assist the stricken family. The ashes from the burnt money is carefully collected, to be wrapped up and placed in the coffin.

Among the superstitions connected with death in China is a strong one regarding cats. As soon as life is extinct, all household pets of this kind are transferred to the neighbours, for if a cat were to leap over the deathbed the corpse would rise at once, frantic with rage. Therefore, a broom handle is placed beside it, in the belief that the dead will pull the broom against its breast and thus sink back to its proper position.<sup>35</sup>

In this connection, too, tiger lore supplies a legend, which according to Dr. De Groot is as follows:

The tiger has on its tail a miraculous hair known as the "hair that causes the soul to return." When the monster has dragged a victim into some mountain recess, he wags his tail all round and over the unfortunate one, who is thus driven to tearing off his clothes, and by this act incidentally improving the tiger's meal, by conveniently removing troublesome shreds. As the cat resembles the tiger in shape and instincts, nothing would be more likely than that the feline should be possessed of such a hair, but her celestial standing being in no wise comparable to that of the tiger, she would, by jumping on the water-bed, cause the dead body to be transformed into a vampire!

During "tiger days" this menace is peculiarly strong, the reader probably being aware of the division of time into two cycles, one of which is named for twelve animals,<sup>35a</sup> and applies equally to years, months, days and even hours. The sequence is unvarying, the day being apportioned as follows:

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. The Rat—Midnight, 11 p.m. to 1 a.m. | 7. The Horse—11 a.m. to 1 p.m. |
| 2. The Ox—1 to 3 a.m.                  | 8. The Goat—1 to 3 p.m.        |
| 3. The Tiger—3 to 5 a.m.               | 9. The Monkey—3 to 5 p.m.      |
| 4. The Hare—5 to 7 a.m.                | 10. The Cock—5 to 7 p.m.       |
| 5. The Dragon—7 to 9 a.m.              | 11. The Dog—7 to 9 p.m.        |
| 6. The Serpent—9 to 11 a.m.            | 12. The Pig—9 to 11 p.m.       |



A moment's reflection will make clear the possibilities of tumult occasioned by the birth of a person in the hour controlled by one of the animals, on a day governed by another; since these creatures are as little disposed toward harmonious intercourse in their abstract form, as in nature. Hence the horoscope expert is summoned immediately on the birth of a child, in order that its path through life shall be guarded against the antagonisms of the horse for the ox, the sheep for the rat, the cock for the dog, the tiger for the serpent, the hare for the dragon, and the pig for the monkey.

His ministrations must include, also, the most careful consideration of the influences, for good or ill, which an individual unwittingly casts over the fate of others; and even towns and villages must be laid out in accordance with this science, as we shall presently learn. "The companions of the bride," says Father Kennelly, "who are to escort her from her parental home to that of the bridegroom, must be born under the auspices of a cyclic animal, living in peace with the animal that presided over the birth of her bridegroom. Were these animals at enmity with each other, the peace and prosperity of the future household would be endangered." In our next section we shall observe the same precautions exercised with regard to those attending at the funeral rites.

#### DRESSING THE DEAD.

Grave-clothes, in China, are prescribed by custom from beginning to end. The first garments must be a pair of spacious drawers—lined with silk to give comfort, and with stockings attached—and a separate jacket, all being the same for men or women. Cotton *padding* is proscribed. In the *I-Li* the lower garments are ordered to be of red, but this custom appears to have been discontinued, the red protection against pernicious influences being provided in another form.

Next comes the garment of white linen worn on the wedding-day and put by for this final occasion. Over this comes another layer of linen, cotton, or silk, according to the means of the family, and more coats and gowns, sometimes to the number of fifteen layers. But five is a number proscribed, as the word for five is synonymous with another that means "involuntarily to bring disaster." Then follow

the outer robes, including the "longevity garment" though the character of these is determined by the social station of the family.

In one of Dr. De Groot's volumes the manner of dressing the beloved departed is described as follows:

"Under the eaves of the hall, the mourners place on the floor one of the large shallow trays of wicker work used in winnowing rice, and on this is placed a wooden form, or a chair, which the principal mourner mounts. He is stripped of his clothes, as far as decency permits, and his head is covered with a large round hat of bamboo, such as is worn in the fields. Assisted by his mother or wife, he now puts on the inner jacket, passing at the same time, a long hempen rope through the sleeves and over his back. Then follow all the other robes in proper sequence, he, meanwhile holding in his hand a bamboo pole with a branch of the banyan tree affixed to the top, which prevents evil influences from entering the garments. The clothes are now fastened together at the back with a couple of large stitches, and taken off the mourner, the rope keeping the sleeves in place. The lot is then laid out underneath the corpse, on which the trousers and stockings have been put. The arms are introduced into the sleeves, and the buttoning of each garment reverently done. A general howling concludes the dressing, which is thus performed by a male even if the dead person is a female."

The use of the tray, chair and bamboo hat are explained thusly: The former prevents the pollution of Mother Earth by the contact with grave clothes; the latter screens the spectacle from the sight of "bright Heaven." As soon as this duty is performed, the son hastily swallows a few mouthfuls of cooked vermicelli, as the long threads counteract the life-shortening influences which the grave clothes have exercised over his person. Next comes an offering of food, which is elaborate and prescribed by formula, this being the last sacrifice before the body is shut up in the coffin; and afterward, the temporary soul tablet is set upon the table.

The *I-Li's* account of a Ruler's visit to a deceased Great Officer, or one to whom he wished to show favour, is interesting. It was usually timed to attend either the "slighter," or the "fuller" dressing—i.e., *under*, and *outer* garments. The moment he arrived the principal mourner was required to stop wailing, and take up a position outside the entrance. In fact, "as soon as he sees the heads of the horses,

he passes through both gates, (*i.e.*, of the inner and outer courtyards) turns to the right, and takes his station with his face to the north, baring the upper part of his body, in concert with all the principal mourners."

An Exorcist<sup>36</sup> and an Invoker accompanied the Ruler, and two servants with lances walked ahead of him, and two in his rear. Offerings to the spirits were set out, and the Ruler, ascending by the eastern steps, took up a position facing west, and therefore the dead. The Invoker faced south.

"Now the Ruler wails, and the principal mourner, having wailed also, salutes the Ruler by laying his forehead to the ground. Then he rises and performs a complete stamping of the feet, (three stamps thrice repeated, in token of uncontrollable grief) and goes out of the gate" (as if expecting the Ruler to leave now, in which case he would have to be seen off. The idea involved was that the impression had to be conveyed that the Ruler's condescension in coming at all was so great that the pretence must be made every few moments that surely no more was to be expected. Hence the ceremonies were constantly interrupted by the principal mourner's rushing toward the gate, and being called back by the Great One). Now the business of dressing was commanded to go on, in the presence of nobles assembled behind the principal mourner. When it was over, the Ruler sat down and placed his hand on the bosom of the dead. The principal mourner laid his forehead to the ground, then performed a complete stamping of the feet, ran out of the gate and was again ordered back.

"Upon this, the Ruler descends by the steps, stands with his face westwards, and orders the principal mourner to lean on the corpse," which he did, with his face toward the west, but being careful not to touch the place on which the Ruler's hand had rested. When he had stamped again, the principal female mourner leant likewise over the corpse.

After this came the encoffining, the sealing of the box, and the presentation of offerings. Then the Ruler stamped, the principal mourner imitating him; and the former prepared to leave. There came a pause in the wailing while the Ruler went out by the gate. On passing through, he alone wailed. The principal mourner then stepped aside, the Ruler bowed to him, and when, at the outer gate he had got into his carriage (which, for this purpose, was one of the second class) the principal mourner wailed and bowingly saw him off.



## THE SOUL TABLET.

This object consists of a thin slab of wood, sheathed in white silk, or cotton, with narrow ribbons of the same material, one either side, affixed with a red rosette. The names, titles and age of the deceased are written on the column between these, and on them, the dates of birth and death. The tablet is called the "silken cloth for the soul," and is intended as a habitation for the as yet weak and unsubstantial spirit.

The summoning of the soul into the tablet is an important ceremony, and for it, the priest is provided with a robe, as rich as possible. Taking his place behind the sacrificial table, he opens the ceremonies by pronouncing a few magical formulæ in Pali or Sanskrit, after which follows the invocation of Ti Tsang Wang, the Great Redeemer, who resides in Hell, whereas O-mi-to Fo (Amitahba) presides over Heaven. From time to time the priest tolls his hand-bell, while his assistants chant continually, and beat clappers and the "bonze's wooden fish" referred to in the proverb. Now and then he raises a horizontal wooden holder for incense-sticks, lacquered in red, whose form suggests the dragon's body, though it actually consists of a lotus blossom and gracefully curved stem, which forms the handle. This he directs to the four points of the compass, solemnly, one after the other, and presently he reads aloud a letter that has been written to the soul. It contains the good news that the mourners have erected the tablet, where the spirit may abide for all time to come, and that a sacrificial meal has been set out in front thereof. "Thrice," sings the priest, "I invite the soul to descend to this place."

Now setting fire to the letter, the priest recites the "hell-conquering Sutra," which passes for a sermon pronounced by Buddha himself. If recited every day for a full year it exempts the soul from the need of passing through hell, and causes a straightway introduction into Nirvana. Next the twelve dishes of sacrificial food are arranged in front of the dead, and the priest takes a small tin bowl of water, representing the Pâtra, or Holy Grail of the Buddhist, and dipping either his finger or a sprig of the banyan or pomegranate tree into it, he sprinkles the offerings, the corpse, the bystanders and the walls.

Meantime the chief mourner has been prostrated before the table, or risen from time to time to hold incense sticks at the height of his

forehead; while the wailing of mourners, and the din of the orchestra have been taken up, or dropped at intervals. Paper trunks and boxes, with paper padlocks and labels, all filled with paper money, some in ingots, or "shoes," and some in the form of "treasury" notes, are now brought in. Two puppet carriers belong to each, but a "treasury officer" in uniform is their headman, as well as the guardian of the "treasury" money. This latter currency is worth far more than the ingots or imitation coins, and produces far greater results in the upper regions, as well as costing much more to the purchasers. So important is this offering that the spirit of this officer is now invoked, and the principal mourner sets out for him a cup of wine. Advance wages are placed about the necks of all the bearers, suspended by a red silk cord.

The priest reads aloud a letter addressed to the treasurer, which informs him of the age, name and titles of the deceased, so that there may be no mistake, and any further instructions the family may desire. The bearers have been arranged in a circle, meanwhile, and a feast laid out for them, while the musicians play for their entertainment. After this, the whole paper collection is set on fire, the mourners kneeling as close to the flames as possible, and their lamentations, the intoning and hand-bell of the priests, and the efforts of the musicians combine with the roaring of the fire to produce an extraordinary and unforgettable din.

Dr. De Groot interprets this burning of money as based on the belief that every case of birth on this earth means the release of a soul from Hades; but such redemption is never granted except on payment of a heavy ransom by this soul to *Yama*, God of Death, and his underlings. Thus, souls desirous of rebirth, and too poor to produce its price, borrow from their fellow manes, and when the soul returns, it is assailed by all these creditors.

The exact amounts of these obligations have been worked out by wise men in the dim ages, and bear an exact relation to the years of birth and death, in whatever cycle of animals—so much for Monkey year, etc., etc.—the figures being pasted on a small board in the shops where the paper money is sold, just as the rate of exchange for the day is announced in the money changer's shop. However, those who wish to make sure, burn three or four times the required amount.

After the bonfire, the priest departs, for the time being, and the



offerings that have been set out on the table are removed and consumed by the mourners.

#### FENG SHUI.

The poorer the people, the sooner they bury their dead. Sometimes the interment takes place on the day of decease, but only under necessity, as hasty, or "blood burial," as it is called, is accounted very bad form. The interval between confining and burial is prolonged among the wealthy to anywhere from three months to a year, and at one period, three years was prescribed for the elect. Embalming processes being unknown in China, the thickness and sealing of the coffin are important considerations, in spite of the preservative qualities attributed to the bits of jade, pearls, and gold placed in the mouth of the dead. It is during these periods of affliction that one relishes one's Chinese neighbours least, it may be said. For climatic reasons, longer intervals are observed in the north than in the south, though even here considerable time must elapse between the two periods, amongst persons of rank. The general practice, however, has come to be in favour of a three-day wait.

The determining factor as to the precise day and hour for burial is the decision of the geomancer, the "professor" of *Feng Shui*, who also prescribes the position of the grave, in order that, in all things, the dead may rest under the constant play of the forces with which those under whose influence he was born shall be in harmony. In short, the adjustment of the individual to the plan of the universe was the consideration dictated by *Feng Shui*—that most powerful element of Chinese thought, ancient as China itself, though subject to important changes at various periods of her history. Of these may be mentioned as a conspicuous example, the custom of placing stone images of men and animals along the avenues leading to the tombs of the great, which was later decreed to be bad *Feng Shui*; and, in spite of the fact that this was the highest honour that could be shown to an individual, since the privilege could be conferred only by the Son of Heaven himself, the practice was discontinued. Trees, also, were considered inauspicious, at one period, unless planted round the sides and back of a grave; yet one sees them, in many of the old cemeteries, either in groves, or forming a rectangular border.

This "Wind-Water"—as the words signify—system of religion, natural philosophy, or whatever may be the correct term to apply to a phase of metaphysics reduced to concrete form, adds to the life of the Chinese still another set of formulæ, which it requires these "professors" to elucidate. The reverence for Nature and her mysteries, the awe inspired by her varying moods, and a profound conviction in the essential finality of the powers of the elements, against which even the best efforts of man range themselves in vain—all of these are salient characteristics of native thought, pervading the poetry and constituting the key to Chinese landscape painting. They provided the soil—worked upon by the teachings of Taoism and Buddhism—that nourished the roots of this Tree of Knowledge. Of its fruits, man—futile creature, in himself—must eat in order to attain to the desired harmony with the Infinite. Thus, and thus only, is his modicum of success and happiness to be achieved, and misfortune avoided.

Yet, on the whole, these strivings appear to have proceeded less from fear, as might be the case with primitive races, than from respect, and a conception of Nature, springing from the blithe optimism peculiar to the Chinese, in which she figures, it is true, as a fundamentally non-benevolent force, but one whose destructiveness is subject to the diligent pursuit of the "science" by which her laws were to be divined.

The abstract form of the beliefs that inspired the search for the *Tao*, (Path), has been most beautifully visualized by the Chinese artist, in whom moved the spirit that sought to express his conception of the Kosmos, and interested itself not at all in the reproduction of a given section of landscape—a point frequently criticized by the foreign art student. Thus, in his pictures of towering mountains, on whose winding paths leading nowhere in particular one descries the most diminutive of human travellers, there abides an atmosphere of prodigious calm, brooded over, nevertheless, by suggestions of tremendous possibilities of an opposite nature.

The common, or practical (if one may use such a term) form of the teachings included under the head of *Feng Shui*, is defined by Dr. De Groot as "a quasi-scientific system, supposed to teach men where and how to build graves, temples and dwellings, in order that the dead, the gods and the living may be located therein exclusively,

or as far as possible, under the auspicious influences of Nature." Under this analysis, therefore, *Feng Shui* proves to be a characteristic rendition of the belief in the interpenetration of the physical, astral and etheric "planes," which is a familiar doctrine among others than the Chinese.

*Feng Shui*, as such, is another of the phases of ancient China, as to whose fate at the hands of "Young China," it is interesting to speculate, more especially in view of the apparent felicity with which the native inhabitants of the treaty ports have adapted themselves for years to living quarters, in the planning of which it necessarily has received no consideration. A vast and complicated—and perhaps not altogether legitimate—offshoot from the body of doctrines in which are recorded an ancient nation's explanation of the plan of the Universe, and the operation of its forces, it is a system whose influence has governed practically every form of human endeavour, not to say every act of the Chinese for upwards of thirty centuries. Hence, it is difficult, after abundant contact with all classes of China's inhabitants, to believe in the utter annihilation of the art of divination which is decreed for it by the glib young persons of to-day, whom the writer has interrogated on the subject. Nevertheless, this dictum is not altogether unsubstantiated—though abundant evidences of its apparent refutation may be observed in the course of a five-minute stroll along the streets of any Chinese city, where large numbers of diviners and fortune-tellers are always to be found, in the full enjoyment of their prestige.

Among the authorities providing support to the prophecy of dissolution of certain forms of ancient beliefs, is modern China's eminent scholar, Dr. Hu Shih, professor of philosophy at Peking's National University, and an important figure in the affairs of the New China, who, in one of his books, disposes of *Feng Shui* by expressing himself in the following terms:

"When I look at a mariner's compass and think of the marvelous discoveries which the Europeans have made therewith, I cannot but feel a sense of shame to recall the superstitious uses which I myself have seen made of this great invention of ancient Chinese genius."<sup>37</sup>

Incidentally, the much broader question that rises to mind, as to what is to be the Chinese thought-system of the future, is dealt with constructively, in the same volume, *The Development of the Logical*



*Method in Ancient China.* This valuable contribution to modern Chinese literature, was written during the author's residence in New York City, 1915-1917, with a clear vision of what was inevitably to be the central problem of all those confronting his native land, in its transition from old to new; for the "new" had already begun to interpret itself not as another phase of China, but rather in terms of that violent revulsion toward Western standards, the reaction from which was to produce the educational problem as it stands to-day.

"How can we best assimilate modern civilization in such a manner as to make it congenial and congruous and continuous with the civilization of our own making?" is the question, as stated by Dr. Hu; and in publishing his comparative study of Western and Chinese schools of philosophy the author had assumed the tremendous task of fusion between East and West, aimed commendably at psychological bases, by "introducing to the Western world the great schools of thought in Ancient China," while at the same time attempting to make his own people "see that the methods of the West are not totally alien to the Chinese mind." The study is designated "a re-discovery of the logical theories and methods of Ancient China," of which he advocates the revival, "re-interpreted in terms of modern philosophy."

"For," says Dr. Hu, with manifest justice, in the Introduction to the work, "it is perfectly natural and justifiable that a nation with a glorious past and with a distinctive civilization of its own making should never feel at home in a new civilization, if that new civilization is looked upon as part and parcel imported from alien lands and forced upon it by external necessities of national existence. And it would surely be a great loss to mankind at large, if the acceptance of this new civilization should take the form of abrupt displacement, instead of organic assimilation, thereby causing the disappearance of the old civilization."

For a number of reasons, not the least of which is the author's recognized position in the field of education and letters, as well as because of his reputation for leadership of that section of the nation's youth known as "Young China," this work of Dr. Hu's is especially to be recommended for perusal at this particular juncture of Chinese affairs.

Resuming, however, our discussion of that phase of the old civil-

ization represented by Feng Shui, and necessarily limiting ourselves to the aspect relating to the question of burial, we find that in striving to enlist the beneficent, and defeat the inauspicious influences of Nature on behalf of the objects of their concern, the professors of geomancy choose, first of all, as the basis of their calculations (founded, of course, on the day, hour and year of birth and death of the deceased) the configurations of a landscape, as being the storehouse of those life-producing elements that offer the means of defeating evil. For here were constantly working the *Yang* and *Yin* forces—Light and Heat versus Darkness and Cold; Heaven and Earth; Positive and Negative; Male and Female; or however those opposite elements may be interpreted, from whose counteractivities is struck the spark of Life itself.

Mountains are regarded as the natural barriers to the winds of evil; and hence great care must be bestowed upon the relation of the grave to clefts between these eminences, and the position of other ranges beyond these openings, which might affect the circulation of the two "Breaths," celestial and terrestrial, for good or evil, as the case may be. Furthermore, their form also proclaims them to be repositories of specific elements, which work harmoniously or otherwise, in combination with those under which the person under consideration was born. Thus, a hill, mound or knoll (for there can not always be mountains at hand) that rise to a point contain fire; those that are rounded, metal; steep sides ending in a rounded top, indicate wood; and when surmounted by plateaux, smooth or irregular, earth or water, respectively, predominate. These are the considerations included under the head of *Feng*, Wind.

*Shui*, water, its equally important concomitant, concerns itself with the propitiation of aquatic influences, which are concentrated in streams, rivers, and watercourses generally, even though these may at times be dried up.

Obstinacies in natural formations are overcome by the construction of tanks in front, and of artificial mounds of earth or stone around the back and sides of a grave. The universal aversion for a straight line, as facilitating the entrance of evil spirits, which manifests itself elsewhere in the erection of the "dragon screen" at the entrance to the dwelling, and artificial rockeries in the garden, dictates the inhibition against the location of a grave in line with a road or stream, or even an avenue of trees. The required accumula-



tion of good aquatic "joss" likewise demands the exercise of careful attention to the overflow of the tank, in which a stated amount of water must always be found.

It requires but a glance at the face of the chief implement of the geomancer, besides the divining rod and almanac—*i.e.*, the compass condemned by Dr. Hu—to apprehend the intricacies of the questions with which it had to deal, and which we can do no more than suggest. They are, obviously, such as no mere amateur may venture to cope with. In the *Feng Shui* doctrines a prominent place is given to the *I Ching* (Book of Changes), "the same ancient book which the sages and learned men of all ages have held in high veneration as a clue to the mysteries of Nature and as an unfathomable lake of metaphysical wisdom explaining all the phenomena of the Universe." Confucius is said to have given so much time to the study of this ancient text-book of the art of divination "that the leathern strips which bound together the boards of his bamboo volume were thrice worn out before he at last declared himself to have understood its contents." Naturally enough, new laws, or new combinations of old ones, might have been expected to emanate from the numerous body of teachers of the art, which was not without its various rival schools; and for these the riddle of human life, as well as the secrets of Creation were assembled and systematized in the compass.

This familiar wooden disc, with rounded bottom and yellow-varnished face bearing a number of concentric circles, minutely inscribed with characters, some red, others black, around a depression in the centre containing the needle, is an object well enough known to tourists and collectors. Its origin is as remote as that of *Feng Shui* itself, and for this reason one of its most interesting features is the division of one of its outer circles into three hundred and sixty degrees. It varies in size, and in the number and character of inscriptions on its face—the larger the disc, the greater the number of circles filled with symbols; for such these characters are held to be, just as the implement itself is regarded, not merely as a surveyor's instrument, as it were, but as a sort of magnet which, in the hands of its accredited manipulator immediately sets in motion the constructive forces registered on its surface.

The compass employed in other departments of the science of divination differs in some points from that used in *Feng Shui*. One of

the most elaborate examples of the latter is shown in our illustration. In the bewildering profusion of characters entered in the divisions and subdivisions marked out on it, the needle itself is almost lost sight of; but by this implement the most important preliminary to any undertaking is determined, after consultation with the almanac. The book announces the "lucky line" of the year, and it is the business of the compass to locate it. In accordance with its findings there then proceeds the building of houses, temples, and towns—and, of course, the selection of grave sites—while repairs to buildings originally planned on a line conflicting with this must await a fortuitous combination, which might be years in presenting itself. Hence, ruins in China are not altogether an indication of mere neglect.

The circle immediately surrounding the glass-covered recess where the needle quivers is inscribed with eight characters representing the Great Ultimate Principle—that which produces *Yang* and *Yin*. "These Powers," says the *I Ching*, "produce the Four Forms, which again produce the Eight Trigrams (*Bah Kwa*). These Trigrams determine good and evil, and good and evil cause the great business of human life."

Although the eight trigrams are not shown in our reproduction of a *Feng Shui* compass, whereon they are replaced by the more broadly inclusive characters, the reader will recall this familiar series of straight and broken lines, which, when arranged around a circle divided into light and darkness by a double-curved line, forms a device universally employed in China as a talisman. It is to be found painted over the doorways of shops and dwellings, or added to advertising announcements on hoardings, or the walls of houses. The unbroken line signifies *Yang*, and the broken line, *Yin*.

The Four Forms from which they are produced consist of the following diagrams:

- ☰ *Major Yang*, representing the sun, heat. (Origin, essence of things).
- ☷ *Major Yin*, signifying the moon, cold. (Attributes of things).
- ☲ *Yang under Yin*, or *Minor Yang*, typifies the fixed stars, daylight, and introduces the law of rotation,
- ☵ *Yin kept under by Yang*, or *Minor Yin*, represents the planets, night, multiplicity, and the law of succession.

From these the eight *kwas* are evolved by placing over them either a broken or an unbroken line, thus:

Khien	Tui	Li	Chen	Sun	Khan	Ken	Khwun

*Khien* and *Khwun*, called the principal *kwas*, represent heaven and earth, the former composed entirely of *Yang*, and the latter of *Yin* lines. Of the significance of the trigrams the *I Ching* says:

"All things endowed with life have their origin in *Chen*, as *Chen* corresponds to the east.

They are in harmonious existence in *Sun*, because *Sun* corresponds with the east and the south.

*Li* is brightness and renders all things visible to one another, and it is its *kwa* which represents the south.

*Khwun* is the earth, from which all things endowed with life receive food.

*Tui* corresponds to the middle of autumn.

*Khien* is the *kwa* of the northwest.

*Khan* is water and the *kwa* of the exact north and distress, into which everything endowed with life reverts.

*Ken* is the *kwa* of the northeast, in which living things terminate and also originate."

These eight primary *kwas* or trigrams (subsequently doubled and combined into sixty-four hexagrams) are believed to have belonged to the language in use before the invention of the ideograph system; one of the most plausible proofs of which theory, says Dr. Hu Shih, is the fact that "the sixth *kwa* (water) has practically the same form as its ideographic equivalent." Their invention is attributed to the legendary first king of China, Fu Hsi, who, according to an inscription on an ancient carving described by Stephen W. Bushell (*Chinese Art*, Vol. I) "traced the trigrams and knotted cords as a means of governing all within the seas." They were revealed to him by the dragon horse, that oft-depicted figure of Chinese design, which is shown rising from the waters of the Yellow River, bearing a scroll upon its back. It was on this scroll that the mystic trigrams were inscribed. "The knotted cords," says Mr. Bushell, "are those that have been compared with the *quipus*, the cord records of the ancient Peruvians."

The *kwas* are used on the mariner's compass, as well as on those employed by the geomancer. They are usually arranged with the three unbroken lines, signifying the full force of *Yang*, at the south, and the three broken strokes for *Yin*, at the north. East, south, west and north indicate respectively, spring, summer, autumn and winter, with subdivisions separating the seasons into six parts each, as:

*Spring.*

立春 Beginning of Spring.  
 雨水 Rain Water.  
 驚蟄 Resurrection of hibernating  
     Insects.  
 春分 Vernal Equinox.  
 清明 Pure Brightness.  
 穀雨 Rains over the Grain.

*Summer.*

立夏 Beginning of Summer.  
 小滿 Grain filling a little.  
 芒種 Grain in Ear.  
 夏至 Summer Solstice.  
 小暑 Slight Heat.  
 大暑 Great Heat.

*Autumn.*

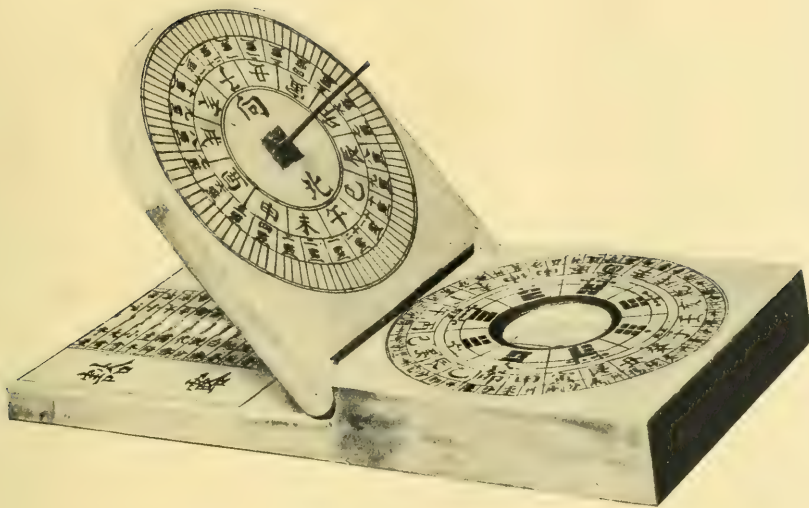
立秋 Beginning of Autumn.  
 處暑 Limit of Heat.  
 白露 White Dew.  
 秋分 Autumnal Equinox.  
 寒露 Cold Dew.  
 霜降 Descent of Hoar Frost.

*Winter.*

立冬 Beginning of Winter.  
 小雪 Little Snow.  
 大雪 Heavy Snow.  
 冬至 Winter Solstice.  
 小寒 Little Cold.  
 大寒 Severe Cold.

But the Chinese compass is still further divided into twenty-four points, as: E.N.E. by E., E., E.S.E. by E., E.S.E. by S., S., S.S.E. by E., and so on. These appear in the third circle, twenty of the characters being among those used to signify the two cycles of time, the Ten Stems and Twelve Branches, or Ten Mothers and Twelve Children. The same characters signify the twenty directions in which the tail of the Great Bear points in its apparent annual revolution round the pole. The second circle contains characters also taken from the two cycles, and has been interpreted as representing the Zodiac.



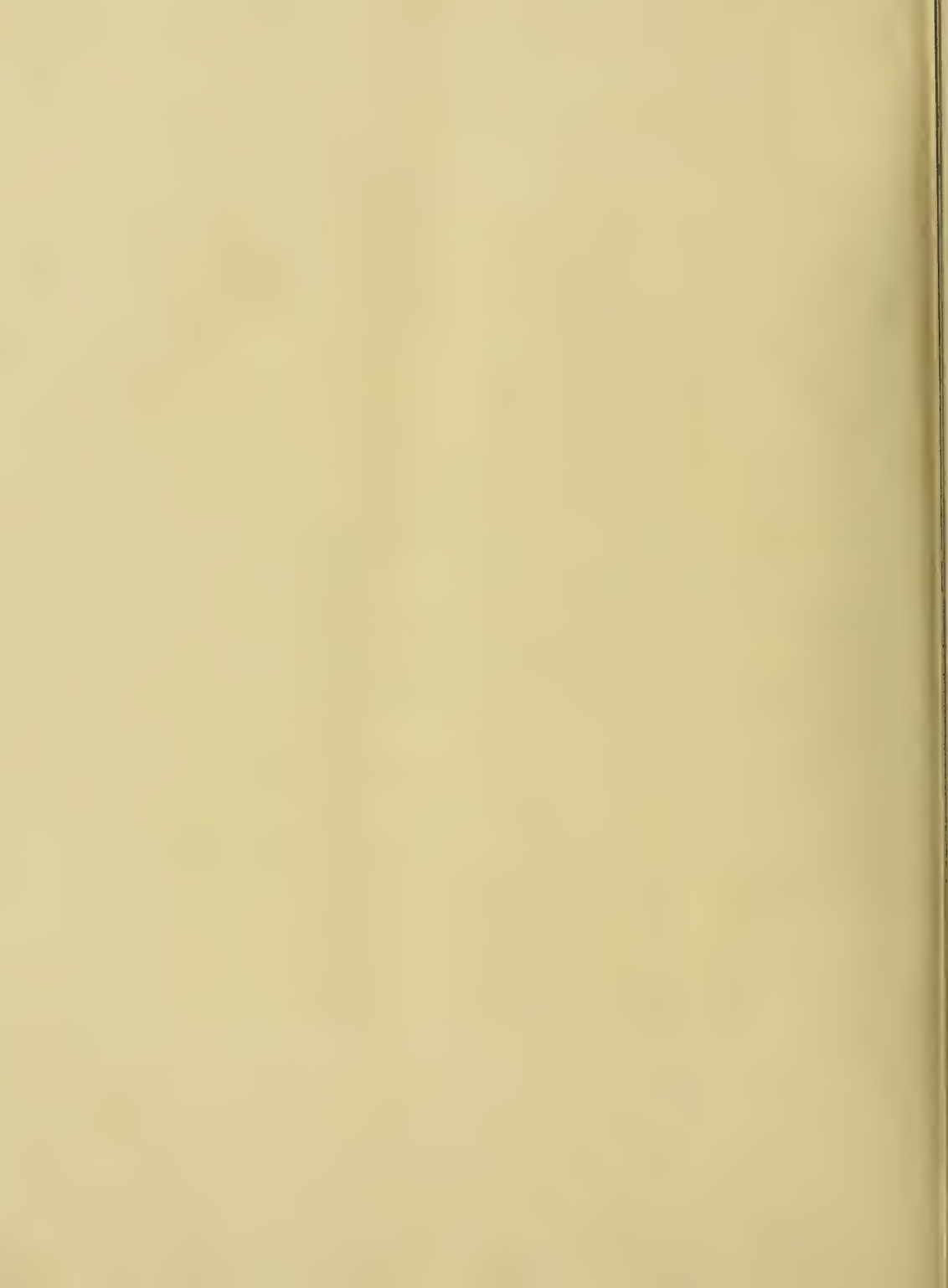


#### THE CHINESE SUN-DIAL.

The raised section is inscribed with the horary characters. To "set" the dial, one is guided by the needle of the compass, where the Eight Kwas are followed by their numerical equivalents, then the characters signifying the Ten Stems, and, in the outer circle, the "Nine Regions," into which the ancient empire was divided by Yu, the Great (2205-2197 a.c.), who caused nine metal tripods to be cast and engraved with a description of these districts.

The peg in the centre of the dial is required to point in the same direction as the needle—northwards. The angle of incline of the dial is determined by the metal rest at its back, which is set into one of the notches cut into the section where the seasons are marked out. Thus, one first adjusts the face of the dial to the season of the year; after which the peg and the needle of the compass are brought into line. Like the Geomancer's compasses, these instruments are regarded as authoritative when they are shown to have been made in Anhwei.





There is throughout much repetition of identical characters, the circles being divided into smaller and smaller parts as they progress away from the centre. The Ten Stems appear in the fourth circle, in combinations of five, and the tenth circle corresponds with the fourth, with the characters placed further to the right.

In the fifth circle the five elements are repeated twelve times, and combined with the points of the compass marked out on the third and fourth. The sixth and eighth are identical with the third, except that the eighth also bears the twenty-four subdivisions of the year, which introduces the calendar, and influences building operations. The seventh, ninth and eleventh circles carry identical characters, while the tenth corresponds with the fifth. In the twelfth appear again the five elements, and this is the section that determines the elements or planets whose influence dominates a given locality.

After this comes the 360 degree circle, and another similarly subdivided, but with red dots or black crosses entered in the sections, to signify good or bad "joss" for each degree. In the outer circle are marked the twenty-eight constellations into which the Chinese divide the heavens—a system also used by the Hindus, Parsees and Arabs, but believed by most authorities to be a Chinese invention. Each quadrant is presided over by a "Celestial Animal"—the Eastern quadrant, (spring) by The Blue Dragon; the Southern quadrant, (summer) by the Red Bird, the Western quadrant (autumn) is the White Tiger's; and the Northern quadrant (winter) that of the Black Tortoise.

Another group of supernatural animals figures in the Creation Myth as having assisted P'an Ku, the moulder of the universe, in his prodigious labours. These were the unicorn, the phoenix, the tortoise and the dragon. "P'an Ku's task occupied eighteen thousand years . . . and, after having formed the sun, moon and stars, the heavens and the earth . . . he died, that his works might live. His head became the mountains, his breath the wind and clouds, his voice the thunders, his limbs the four quarters of the earth, his blood the rivers, his flesh the soil, his beard the constellations, his skin and hair the herbs and trees, his teeth, bones and marrow the metals, rocks and precious stones, his sweat the rain, and the insects creeping over his body, human beings!"<sup>28</sup>

## THE ENCOFFINING.

Having sought, by means of this extremely broad outline, to refresh the reader's mind as to the main points of the "science," whose findings play so large a part in the fate of the deceased, we may now return to the subject of the preparations whose course was interrupted by this discussion, at the point of the completion of the rites incidental to the dressing of the corpse, which must now be encoffined.

In the case of aged people, the coffin is frequently purchased during life, and stored away somewhere, the sheds used for this purpose being a familiar sight in the outlying districts of most cities. There are, however, abundant instances of the coffin occupying a space in the room of a bedridden person, and of his fancy for being laid therein, from time to time, before death, à la Sarah Bernhardt.

But whether secured after, or before death, the coffin must be brought home with due ceremony; and among friends and distant relatives, appointed for the purpose, are those called "managers of the coffin." These go to the shop, shed or whatever spot the coffin reposes, attired in plain white linen. Eight or sixteen coolies carry it by means of a rafter that rests on the shoulders. A band of music leads the procession, followed by the bearer of a red umbrella of state, two men each carrying a large gong, and two or four lictors, who must cry out loudly from time to time "iu.o.o.o." which exhorts people to clear the way. After them, come the managers, then the coffin, carried foot-end forward. There is a long piece of narrow red cloth over the top, and a couple of large flowers of gilt or coloured paper, the latter being good luck talismans, employed on any and all occasions, while the former indicate literary honours, being derived from the custom of Emperors personally to bestow a golden rose, of beautifully carved wood, as the highest honour to be won at the examinations.

The mourners leave the house and meet the procession, wearing mourning clothes. When it comes in sight they kneel down in the road, and burst into loud wailings, which mingle with the cries of the lictors. When the coffin reaches them there is a halt, and one of the family rises and places a string of copper coins, a small quantity of uncooked rice and a few pieces of firewood or charcoal, on the lid; while the others light mock money on the pavement to give evil spirits

something with which to occupy themselves. Then the procession moves on and enters the dwelling through the main entrance, amidst a terrific hubbub of gongs, "iu.o.o.o.'s" and lamentations.

The coffin is set down in the courtyard, or hall, and everything being removed from the lid, this is taken off. Inside will be found parcels of slacked lime, and heaps of paper clippings. This commodity, cut into strips about a foot in length and two inches in width, is to be seen at all times, strung up in bunches in the shops dealing in "joss" paper. A loose board exactly fits into the bottom—all of these articles being supplied by the coffinmaker. These things are now taken out, and the empty case placed in front of the water-bed, head towards the latter. Meantime the wailing has ceased, but not the music, nor the cry of the lictors. The headman of the coolies strews the ashes in the bottom of the coffin, saying: "I scatter ashes to cause your sons and grandsons to acquire piles of wealth." His attendants exclaim: "Yes, O yes, certainly."

Then the headman scatters a handful of small iron nails over the ashes, in order, he chants, "that your sons and grandsons may procreate male offspring," and the chorus responds as before. (The word for nail, *ting*, in its written form means a male individual). Now comes a handful of hemp-seeds and another of peas, signifying that male issue shall become as numerous as these seeds;<sup>39</sup> and to these are next added wheat, millet and paddy, and a preparation of yeast made from rice.

Thus every important form of good luck from the Chinese point of view is provided for, except one, viz., high rank, and this is now introduced by means of a quantity of pith of rice-paper. On top of this are laid the articles that had been removed from the coffin, the paper cuttings, and the lime. Then comes the loose board which proves to have seven holes bored into it, and is called the "Board of Seven Stars." Over this is placed a mattress stuffed with paper, cotton being proscribed as has been mentioned. Then come a mat of pith of water rushes, and over this another of the same sort; and a pillow of bamboo and wicker, similar to those used in life that look like a block.

#### THE BOARD OF SEVEN STARS.

The coffin is now ready, but before its prospective occupant is laid within, let us interrupt the ceremonies, as it were, to consider



the meaning of the "Board of Seven Stars." This object is all that survives of the very ancient custom of painting the outside of the coffins of the ruling classes with symbols intended to represent the Universe, whose miniature reproduction was thus believed still further to facilitate the resurrection of the dead. Into this decorative plan entered—besides the sun, moon and stars—the points of the compass, the seasons, and the colours and animals typifying them. That the exterior representations of infinity, however, were regarded as of lesser importance is shown by the fact that while coffins are no longer so decorated, the "Board of Seven Stars" is so firmly entrenched in religious belief that it is as much a part of the coffin-maker's work as is the lid, or, in fact, the coffin itself.

The "Seven Stars" are those of the Great Bear constellation, which the Chinese call the "Northern Bushel," instead of the "Big Dipper," from its resemblance to their bushel measure. They preside beneficently over birth, as well as death, the "Seven Star Lamp," consisting of seven lights of any description, being set by the bedside of the baby for seven days and nights, to guard the newcomer from the seven diseases of childhood.

"The seven stars of the Bushel," says the *Shi Ki*, "which are styled the Revolving Pearls or the Balance of Jasper, are arrayed so as to form a body of seven rulers. The Bushel is the chariot of the Emperor" (therefore typifying Heaven, perhaps, since the latter was regarded as its Son). "Revolving around the pole, it descends to rule the four quarters of the sphere and to separate the *Yin* and the *Yang*; by so doing it fixes the four seasons, upholds the equilibrium between the five elements, moves forward the subdivisions of the sphere, and establishes all order in the Universe. All these functions devolved upon the Bushel."

The importance of this body-rest having been determined, we may now turn our attention again to the ceremonies connected with the removal of the body from the water-bed. Before this important act takes place, one of the mourners puts a handful of coppers into the sleeves of the robe, and gently shakes them out again into a bowl, which the kneeling son holds in position. These coins the sons divide among themselves. The headman of the coolies now passes a long strip of white cloth underneath the corpse, ties the ends together on the breast, seizes the knot, and with the sons taking hold of the head



and shoulders, the daughters of the feet, and daughters-in-law of the middle, the loved one is laid in his last resting-place. The small things he valued in life, his tobacco pouch and pipe, his pencil or writing materials, or, in the case of a child, his toys, are laid on his breast; and now the jade, gold, or pearls are put into the mouth to diffuse the essence of life, and to serve as torches, to light the way of the soul on its travels through the dark regions, and toward the Lotus Lake.

Then the empty spaces of the coffin are tightly packed with parcels of lime and the ashes of the paper money; and a white sheet, on which a smaller one of red has been stitched is spread over all, covering the face. Now come one pair of large and one pair of small trousers stuffed with ingots of gold and silver paper money; and the two paper slaves that attended the body on its water-bed, are placed at its feet. A small mirror is added,<sup>40</sup> as another means of "lighting" the way; and finally, a narrow sheet of linen, half as long as the coffin, with a human figure roughly outlined on it in black ink, male or female, as the case may be. These are purchased in the paper money shops for a few coppers.

Dr. De Groot speaks of a custom prevailing in some parts of southern China that recalls the swathing process of the Egyptians. Strips of red and white cloth are laid down lengthwise and crosswise on the coffin-lid and the body placed on top. The bands are wound round and round and tied in many knots, these latter being of happy augury in China. Two ends of the red cloth are cut off, one of which goes to the eldest son, and the other is divided amongst the sons-in-law.

When the lid is about to be set in place all bystanders except the kinsmen withdraw a few steps, as it is dangerous to have one's shadow enclosed in a coffin. Then a final attempt is made to resuscitate the dead—a challenge, as it were, issued to the spirits of *Yang!* The tablet of the soul is placed on the breast and the eldest son, kneeling down, exclaims: "Father (or mother), stand up!" The appeal proving vain, he mournfully and respectfully replaces the tablet on its table. Then the elder females address the loved one in endearing terms to set his mind at ease, promising to take proper care of his burial and of his tomb, and to offer daily sacrifices to his soul.

And now the harrowing moment has really arrived, when the lid must be laid on. First the edges of the case are covered with a mixture of lime and oil of the thung tree. Only two nails, or if the case is very

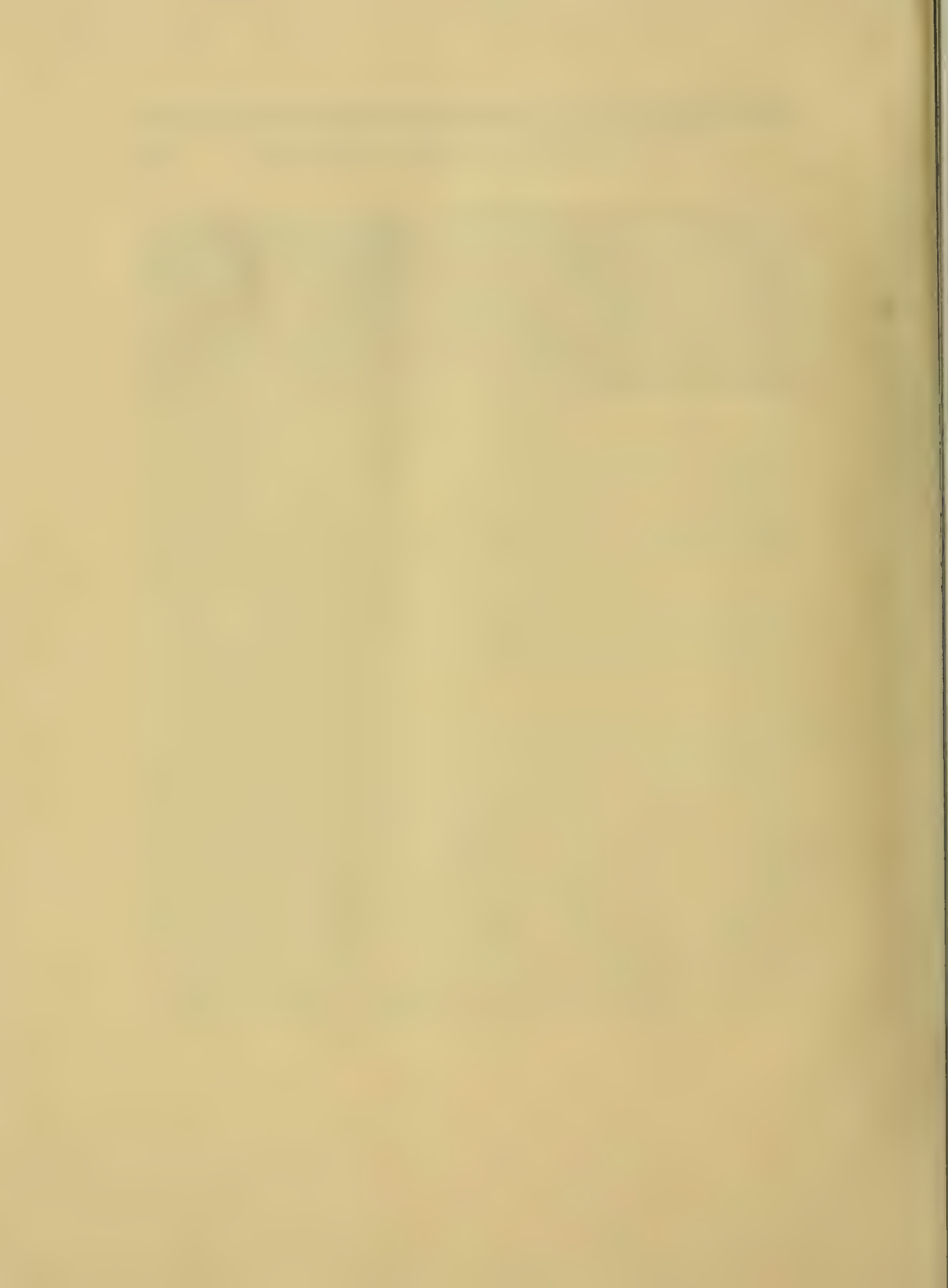
heavy, iron pins, are used, one in the middle of each long side, with small pieces of red cloth caught in to defeat disaster. While driving the spikes the headman says: "I drive nails to cause your sons and grandsons to bring forth male offspring." In the end the hermetically sealed casket is sometimes further secured with four wooden pegs. From these incantations and exclamations it will be plain that the Chinese attach a great and mystical importance to the influence of words, whether spoken or written; and that speech is believed to be endowed with power over the fate of living persons, is evident from their objection to the use of the word "death."

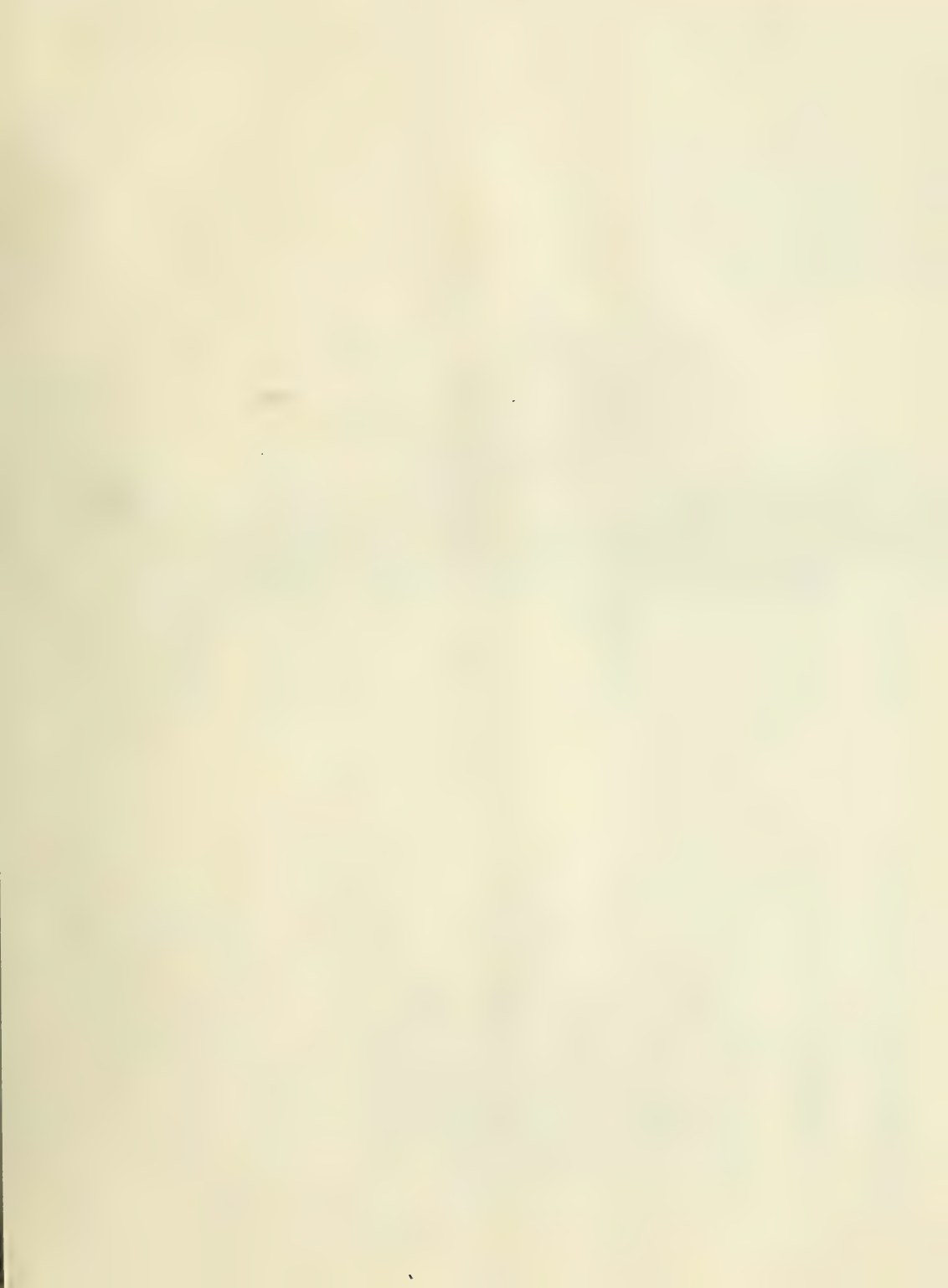
It is considered a great advantage to have the fastening of the coffin lid performed by a person of higher rank than the deceased; and when the family is fortunate enough to enlist the services of such an one, a great to-do is made over his reception. The rite is performed with an axe, in such case, with a red cloth wrapped round the handle. The implement is handed the dignitary by the headman of the coolies, the Great One only touching it with his slender fingers, while the work is done by the other.

This person is due to receive compensation for his trouble, the offering being sent to his home afterward. It consists of rolls of dollars, gilt flowers, a piece of red silk, and as many other presents as would be befitting his rank—all such matters being the subject of careful calculation.

After the lid is secured, the water-bed and all articles belonging to the dead that have not been placed in the coffin, go to the coolies as their perquisites. The coffin is now transferred to the place that had been occupied by the water-bed, the paper sedan chair having been burned. The white curtain is again arranged as a screen. Now the table in front is set with the incense-burner of ancestors; the soul tablet, in the centre; and a candle, either side, which represent the family. The portrait is hung over the table, and a piece of white cloth hangs in front from its edge to the floor, where a white mat is laid. Mourners now place themselves in front of the table and make obeisance to the spirit, while a large bowl of cooked rice is placed on the coffin, with incense sticks stuck into it, and twenty chopsticks beside, to insure reduplication of members. The belief is that ancestors return all these favours, in gratitude and approval. Then the mourners retire, taking leave, one by one, by bowing the forehead to the floor.

Dried meats and fish, and scorched grain are now placed by the bier behind the screen, as sacrificial food offerings, this custom being based on that which provided for a long interval between the coffining and burial. Meantime, while awaiting the report of the geomancer, the house must be purified of the pernicious influences of death, and for this office the priests are again called in. Follows, also, a long succession of subsequent rites for the salvation of the soul, as well as the Great Buddhist Mass, the number of these depending on the means and position of the family.







THE CATAFALQUE DIVISION OF A TYPICAL PEKING FUNERAL PROCESSION,  
IN THE STYLE OF THE LAST DYNASTY

The obsequies are those of a "lady of first rank," this announcement being made by the characters inscribed on the green fan-shaped standards preceding the sedan chair. The latter contains the portrait and the soul tablet.

In the gold-embroidered inscription on the red boards carried at the head of the division are set forth the titles and honours of the lady's husband, who is thus shown to have achieved the highest degree of scholarship - the Hanlin Yuan. The distinction rendered him eligible for some position of official eminence, evidently not yet attained, since the only official title mentioned is a purely honorary one, i.e., "Assistant to the Head of the Supreme Court," a quasi-official body, performing no functions, all procedures of law having been administered through the Ministry of Justice.

Next in importance to the deceased is the eldest son, who may be seen just preceding the catafalque. He walks with bowed-in grief, is clothed in sackcloth, and carries the soul banner in one hand, and a mourning staff in the other. In front of him is the central brazier borne by two white-robed figures on whose shoulders rest the bamboo poles from which it is swung.

The group of banners near the head of the division resemble the soul banner, but are

not personal to the deceased. They are added for effect and are the property of the undertaker, whose name and business address are written largely, in black characters, on the reverse side of all the boards and standards, including those that attend the catafalque, red on one side, green on the other.

Following these banners are the "umbrellas of state," accompanied only by a brass gong. Whatever their original significance, which was partly official, but also involved with the feeling that the sun must not shine on the dead, they were and are to be hired for the occasion.

Next come the ancient war-weapons, used perhaps as a symbol of power.

In the group of musicians preceding the fan-shaped standard-bearers may be observed those that carry the two instruments made of wood, and shaped like a butter-churn, whose voice is like that of a foghorn. They are slung over the shoulders of the musicians. Their rightful place is in the vanguard of the procession itself, among the "way clearers."

The same is true of the flag-like standards, whose inscriptions admonish the public to "make way."

The chief paper scatterer attends the sedan chair. He stands in the centre of the picture, with upraised hand, having just sent aloft his offering of white paper circles, which will fall to the ground and aid the soul in finding its way back to the home, where the soul tablet will be enshrined on the conclusion of the funeral rites.

北京  
周培春畫



## Chapter Fourteen:

### *The Funeral Procession.*



WHEN the diviner has delivered his dictum as to the auspicious day and hour when the burial of the dear departed may be undertaken in safety, preparations are immediately set on foot, by the notification of friends and acquaintances of the date and hour; and invitations to act as overseers of the various sections of the processions are sent out. Sometimes these take the shape of printed forms, and the wording politely requests the recipient *not* to attend, meaning, of course, just the opposite. The two days preceding the burial are fully occupied with a repetition of the food sacrifices and howling ceremonies, this being the great feast offered as a final leavetaking to the dead, who is about to leave the "Bright home,"<sup>41</sup> the house, for the "Dark home," or tomb.

All sorts of sacrificial wine tankards, incense-burners, and candlesticks shaped like the long life character, and made of tin or pewter, are arranged on tables. Another letter eulogizing the dead is read aloud, while the wailing of relatives and the music cease for the time;

and then it is burned. At the conclusion of this, the lamentations break forth again; and the principal mourner creeps on all fours, the others following, towards the table, there to offer incense and wine. When the chief mourner bursts into a special sort of whining, as if overcome, others come forward to help him to his feet; and this is the signal for the funeral procession that has been forming outside, to get under way.

The reader who may have been regaled with the gorgeousness of the funeral procession of an old-school dignitary in Peking, or elsewhere in China, will observe from the following much condensed summary of Dr. De Groot's description of an Amoy funeral, that these spectacles differ but little in various parts of the country, it being understood that they are to be witnessed in their full glory, to-day, only on the death of an official of the former Empire. The single essential variation between southern and northern customs, in Dr. De Groot's account, occurs in an interesting detail, at the very beginning, when, first of all, a kinsman, or friend of the family, as is customary, opens the procession, by walking (or riding) some distance ahead of it to clear the way.

He is dressed in white linen, including a cap of the same, and he politely asks the travelling-kitchen proprietor, the vendors presiding over movable street stalls, the wheelbarrow coolies and whatnot, to remove themselves and their vehicles from the path. In Amoy he was formerly attended (and this is the feature in question) by a coolie carrying a basket filled with bits of betel-nut wrapped in siri-leaves, and mixed with a little wet lime-dough. To indicate that the request to clear the way was not made in the spirit of demanding a right, the bit of betel-nut was bestowed by way of gracious advance acknowledgment of a favour about to be received. Such procedure played no part in plainer funerals, nor did it obtain anywhere except in the districts where the people were addicted to the habit of betel-nut chewing.

Next, in all Chinese funeral processions, comes the "paper scatterer," who, at regular intervals, fills the air with the round, or rectangular sheets of white paper, which drop in the road, and must cover the water, if a creek, or river has to be crossed. These are intended to propitiate evil spirits prowling about to cause mishaps—out of revenge, it is thought, inasmuch as they are supposed to be

those unfortunate ones who have been neglected by an undutiful posterity. White paper, being higher priced, is more valued, and Peking witnesses of funeral processions will readily recall these circles, which are also intended for the important purpose of aiding the soul in finding its way back to the home. The scatterer and his assistants also move up and down along the sides of the procession, and, in the north, during the ceremony of setting fire to the paper images and houses, they fling the circles into the flames that the discs may be carried upward toward heaven. If the wind scatter them broadcast, so much the more auspicious will be the journey of the dead man.

The paper-scatterer, in Amoy, also formerly distributed siricuds, but one of his regular auxiliary duties anywhere is to affix shreds of red cloth to street gates and bridges, all along the road, and to see that temple-doors are shut as the procession approaches, for the divinities must not be obliged to witness death. He is followed by two trumpeters, (recalling those who marched similarly in the funeral train in Rome), wearing black jackets with red borders at the sides, and low, round, black hats, with upturned brim and red silk fringe on top. Their long instruments of copper are capable of one or two notes only,<sup>42</sup> but these are deemed sufficient to frighten away the unpropitiated. At their heels meander two dirty boys, barefooted, and carrying banners—white, in this case, though most of the remainder are red. Firecrackers are exploded from time to time, as a further aid in clearing the way of evil spirits. This group composes the vanguard.

Its approach is the signal for activities to begin among those entrusted with the important ceremony of the burning of sacrificial foods, which, like the paper money, images of servants and retainers, horses, male and female friends and even houses, belong in the category of the dead man's needs in the next world, if such have been his possessions during life. When the funeral is that of some august personage the burning of the food takes place in the matsheds erected along the route of the procession. At such times the Great Hatamen Street of Peking seems suddenly invaded by a mushroom village that has sprung up in the night, these matsheds being in many cases as tall as the houses round about; and, presided over by important-looking persons, they are furnished with rugs, pictures, chairs, and, of course,



the tables on which the paraphernalia for funerals must be displayed. In the case of the funeral of a poor man, who will know no other needs than food and money, the ceremony is not overlooked; but it is performed by appointed delegates, who burn the money, or stand with the smoking food offerings in their hands, in front of shops extending the privilege.

The second division of the procession opens with two men, dressed like the trumpeters, each carrying a long pole, from the top of which swings a cylindrical lantern of paper, the upper part of it covered with as many flounces, as there are generations in the dead man's family. On one side are inscribed the official titles and surname of the deceased; on the other: "Illustrious father (or mother) of . . . generations"—whatever the number.

After this come two very big lanterns (red) swung from curved poles, and called "orange" lanterns. They are inscribed with the titles and names of the deceased. Lighted candles that burn down in the course of the march are not replaced, though they are supposed to pilot the soul. After the lantern bearers comes a band of six, or eight, musicians. The instruments consist of wooden clarinets, one small drum beaten with a single stick, or one drum, flat, and with buffalo-skin stretched on one side; one pair of cymbals; a small gong; and a frame with two little gongs. Musicians of this sort belong to the lowest class in China. In the south they take off their coats when they become warm, and tie them on to their backs, walking with the upper part of the body naked. They used to be required to howl from time to time.

In Peking, the vanguard of the procession is invariably accompanied by two wooden instruments, somewhat resembling a butter churn in appearance, which emit a long-drawn out, dolorous note, not unlike that of a fog-horn, and with something of the latter's long-distance carrying power (*see* illustration, *The Funeral Procession*). The uniformed brass bands, coming more and more into vogue in the port cities, and in Peking, as an adjunct to the instruments of tradition, fortunately are not encountered elsewhere. Their repertoire being usually limited to such melodies as "Marching through Georgia," "There'll be a Hot Time in the Old Town To-night," and similar classics, the effect is disconcerting, to say the least, when combined with the efforts of the paper scatterer; the waving of the



symbolic plumes of wheat, and the other paper effigies, of servants, animals, houses, etc.; the embroideries of the catafalque and pavilion; and the hundred and one other relics of ancient China. They are, however, mere adjuncts, in larger funerals, and generally speaking, do not replace the traditional instruments even in simpler displays. Their function is, apparently, to add effect!

It is, at all events, one of the former variety of bands that accompanies the next feature of the procession—a white portable tent, or sometimes it is a pavilion of wood. Front and sides are open, and the draperies are embroidered with dragons, in gold thread, and are deeply fringed. On either side of it run small boys bearing lanterns. In the pavilion stands an image, with blood-red face, from which white eyes protrude, three in number, for one is set into the forehead. The expression is terrifying, and the attitude of the figure as menacing as it is meant to be. The dress is that of a warrior; and the right hand flourishes a trident, while the left holds aloft a red seal, token of authority. This is, of course, the familiar "Spirit that clears the way," seen in all parts of China, often of enormous size, and usually made of paper.<sup>43</sup> Among the Chinese in Java, he is sometimes taller than a two-storied house; and when he attains these dimensions he is stuffed with the heart, liver and intestines of a pig.

This figure takes the place of the Exorcist who formerly officiated at funerals, and whom we mentioned in the quotation from the I Li's regulations governing a Ruler's attendance at an officer's funeral. Before the procession starts, an assortment of sweetmeats, etc., is set before him. If the family be too poor to provide such an image, the pavilion, which, along with all the other paraphernalia, is supplied by the undertaker, is carried without it.

After this in imperial days, would have followed the pavilion that bore the official degree of the deceased, which might be no more genuine testimony to his rank during life than were the mandarin's robes, in which many a poor man was laid to rest; for such honours could be purchased for this purpose by a rich man who had never quite succeeded in "making" a government post. On the other hand, a real one also could be borrowed for the occasion.

This pavilion was of imperial yellow, and profusely embroidered, as containing something emanating from the Son of Heaven; and it naturally was surrounded with special pomp. A couple of boys

walked to right and left, carrying yellow banners, and a complete band and escort of attendants and lictors, and whatnot, preceded it. Flags were added to the shoulders of the gong-bearers, and there were, besides, bearers of boards that enjoined respect on the bystanders, and called attention to the titles of the deceased. (*See illustration, The Funeral Procession*).

It was preceded and followed by a varying number of the circular "umbrellas of state"—red silk, or satin, with three tiers of flounces, embroidered, and fringed with white—which accompany the important elements in the procession, such as the sedan chair containing the portrait and the soul tablet, and especially the catafalque.

These "umbrellas of state," as many of our readers are doubtless aware, are so called from the fact that they were marks of appreciation presented to a mandarin, on his retirement, or promotion to some other office, by the people whom he had governed. Such an umbrella was accounted among his proudest possessions, and on his departure from his yamen, it was carried in the procession formed by his retainers, servants, lictors, etc., and the important members of the community he was leaving. Among the Chinese it is known as the "umbrella from ten thousand of the people," having been always presented in the name of the latter, though paid for by the rich constituents. Even more precious still, and much more rarely bestowed, was the "garment from ten thousand of the people"—an official robe also made of rich, red satin. It was brought to the yamen with great pomp and ceremony, carried in a pavilion and accompanied by a band of music. The umbrellas were topped in the colour indicating the class of the official, and thus one sees them in the funeral processions, roofed in various tints, those immediately attending the catafalque representing, naturally, the highest rank achieved by the departed. In our illustration, green is found topping this group of umbrellas, the same colour being repeated in the costumes of the attendants. This proclaims the military official, as distinguished from the civil—the officer of the Army of the Green Standard, as the provincial forces of the Manchus were called.

(Other uses of the colour also have a bearing on the question of posterity, green being considered a lucky colour for children).

But the principal group in this subdivision of the procession were the sets of two or four literary graduates, dressed in the full uniform

of their rank. They walked afoot behind the yellow pavilion, stately, majestically, as long as the inhabited quarters had not been passed. But once the open country was reached, they took to palanquins. The graduate is no less a feature of the funeral procession in these republican days; but he is clothed in plain garments usually consisting of a long coat of grey, with an overjacket of black.

Next comes a red pavilion, and red flag bearers. This contains a long narrow box of red, lacquered wood, placed erect. Gilt dragons are sculptured on the front, and gilt flowers affixed on either side. This is the receptacle for one or more square plates of stone inscribed with a short biography of the dead, to be deposited in the grave. The slabs of stone, however, are not in the box, but are carried to the grave by a coolie.

Any funeral procession may be enlarged by red pavilions donated by friends of the family, and these sometimes run up to dozens. They are empty and have the donor's name pasted on the back. The I Li and Li Ki speak of horses presented in like manner, presumably to be used for hauling the collection of objects to be placed in the tomb. These latter, by the way, do not form part of the procession, but are taken to the grave by another route, in a cart, usually.

After these auxiliary pavilions comes the last and most important section of the procession, in which are the soul, the coffin and the mourners. It opens with a pavilion of dark blue (the colour also symbolic of death,) and two dark blue flags. This pavilion of the soul contains a small closet, or tabernacle, carved, painted, gilded, and with folding doors in front. Inside are the tablet, the incense-burner of ancestors, and the two candles representing the family. Four directors walk in this part of the procession. At the back of the pavilion two paper lanterns bear the inscription: "Hundred of sons and thousands of grandsons." On the front side of the vehicle are two narrow boards inscribed as follows:

"Bestriding a crane he has already departed for the Western Heaven,

But we have called his soul back to this earth, and it obligingly abides amongst us."

The soul, of course, for the present, inhabits not this tablet, but the temporary one in the palanquin of state, which now follows—the "sedan-chair of the soul." The painted portrait, which is likewise a



seat of the soul, is also placed in this chair, suspended against the back panel. Four relatives or friends, in mourning dress, escort the soul, and two orange lanterns. These move in front to assist the soul in keeping to the right path. Two white paper lanterns hang from the two outside rear corners of the palanquin.

If the burial takes place while the great Buddhist Mass is being celebrated, a palanquin of state contains a paper image, or "body of the soul." Buddhist priests who have officiated at the previous rites march immediately in front of this palanquin, with a few musicians. Behind them appears a long streamer of rose satin, with blue ribbons. It has an ornamental board at the top and bottom, and is inscribed with the deceased's titles in gilt letters. This is the "soul banner," which is believed to be really the soul, and is interred on the lid of the coffin. Groups of banners, in blue and white, also precede the catafalque. If the characters on the soul banner have been written by a person of military rank, this grandee rides in the procession on horseback, nominally carrying the banner, but, as a matter of fact, a coolie performs the office for him. In imperial days, if he were actually in the service, he would have been escorted by soldiers, with swords and other weapons, including bows and arrows. Families were wont to be very proud of such a cortège, from which civil mandarins were debarred.

Now comes the coffin and attendant mourners, musicians and others. First appear two youthful male relatives of the family, dressed in white mourning, each carrying a pole with a dragon's head at the top, and bearing an oblong piece of white linen inscribed: "linen of which third and fourth degree mourning clothes are made." Two more banners are inscribed with encomiums of the dead.

Following these is a band of eight musicians, with flutes and stringed instruments, as well as the drums, gongs and others. Four "managers of the coffin," in white garments, walk immediately in front of the bier. The draperies of the catafalque, red for a male person, blue, for the female, were, of course, determined by the rank and wealth of the family. The embroideries on the sides of these splendid hangings depict classical stories of filial devotion. A dragon occupies the front panel, and a tiger, or unicorn the back; while on the top, the dragons, flowers and clouds symbolize the fertilizing rains that cause crops to grow, and provide food, raiment, and wealth to human-

ity. Because a unicorn made its appearance at the birth of Confucius it is believed to have power to influence the spirits that cause famous people to be born into a family. The tiger is expected to intimidate evil spirits.

The wailing sons of the dead follow immediately behind, each carrying a small mourning, or "filial" staff. Sometimes one or more sons walk at the side of the catafalque with a hand resting on the coffin, and often a man walks either side of the eldest son, as if he needed support. Sons unable to be present are represented by a complete suit of sackcloth carried on a tray, or in a basket, by a servant. Infant sons are always taken to the tomb, and usually a copper coin is tied between the eyebrows by a red silken string, as a protection against the influence of death.

Loud lamentations prevail all along the way, until the uninhabited parts are reached, when they cease. Besides sons and grandsons, all relatives in male descent walk behind the coffin, attired in the degree of mourning proper to the kinship. Females of the family, except the next of kin, only follow the coffin at the outset, and then return home, without interrupting their wailing. In some parts of China branches of trees are fastened to the top of funeral banners, just as among some of the nations of Europe boughs of cypress, willow, or yew are carried, and thrown into the pit when the coffin has been lowered. A live white cock, emblem of the sun, and of the concentrated elements of Yang, is also seen, with feet tied together, and set upon the top of the catafalque. The augural significance of the cock is based on a simple fact, viz,—that the pronunciation of the word for "cock" is the same as that for "good luck." Naturally, his feathers must be white to accord with mourning requirements.

He is, at all events, an important feature of the procession, functioning in a variety of ways in different parts of the country. In some districts, when the body of one who has died in some distant part, is brought home for burial, as must be done to ensure his own and his family's well-being,<sup>44</sup> the mourners go to meet the coffin bearing a white cock, alive, or made of paper and bamboo splints. At the point of meeting, a part of the spirit of the deceased is believed to enter into the bird, and this serves to lure the remainder of the soul to return to the body. The cock, in this case, is set directly on to the coffin for the remainder of the journey, to be afterwards removed to the catafalque,



if there be one. His crow is also an aid in fixing the attention of the soul; and his role in relation to the soul tablet, is an important one, as we shall presently be observing.

Once the spot selected for the burial is neared, a suitable place for "dismissing the guests," is chosen, as persons whose horoscopes do not agree with the day and hour of the ceremonies may have a bad influence on the fate of the deceased. With this object in view, arrangements are made *en route*, with travelling kitchens and cooked-food shops; and from these a feast is provided to refresh the guests after their journey, which, by the way, is made at a much faster rate than is customary in the West. These now take their leave, and the ceremonies proceed.

The grave is found ready, having been dug under the supervision of the professor of geomancy. The coffin is set down on the edge of the pit, and, for a short while, mourners and others sit about idly, without lamentations, or music. Then one of the grave-diggers deposits a copper coin in each of the four corners, saying: "I deposit these coins to cause your sons and grandsons to acquire wealth." He follows these with a few nails, and cereal grains, accompanying the act with the same incantations as had been used before at the encoffining. Then a firepan with purification incense is held inside the pit, after which the coffin-bearers approach, and lower the coffin, leaving the rafter to which it is attached resting on the ground. Slowly they unknot the ropes, and move them away, amidst the beating of gongs, cymbals and drums.

If the dead had been an official a salute would be now in order. Mourners wail loudly, and stamp their feet. Bystanders recoil, lest their shadows are shut up in the grave. Many hold a blade of grass in their mouths for some sort of protection.

As soon as the coffin reaches the bottom, the professor stretches a thread lengthwise over the pit, and with the aid of his compass tests the position of the coffin, lest this do not accord with his calculations; and frequently this leads to much raising and lowering before this scientist signifies approval.

The sons now proceed towards the pavilion with the soul tablet, first having thrown away their mourning staves, which have been picked up and thrust into the ground side by side, at the head of the pit. The musicians play and lictors shout their "iu.o.o.o.," while the

eldest son takes out the temporary tablet, which, as will be remembered, contains the soul; the second son takes the permanent tablet; and the third, the incenseburner of ancestors. These three objects they place on the ground at the foot of the pit, the censer in front of the tablets. The permanent tablet is then set on the coffin lid by the headman of gravediggers, and the sons kneel down exclaiming: "Father (or mother) rise!" If the son is a baby, the person in charge of it makes it stammer out the words. The soul is now believed to have entered into this, its permanent resting-place, and when the gravedigger lifts it and hands it to the eldest son, he receives it as the patron divinity of the family, and sets it reverently back in its place at the foot of the grave.

After this the sons take handfuls of earth into the lap of their sackcloth garments and drop them on the coffin. The soul streamer is taken down, and folded lengthwise over the coffin, the name of the officer who had written the characters being taken off. As this had been inscribed on a separate piece of paper, pasted over the others, it is easily removed. The temporary soul tablet is now laid in the pit, and the slate stones, the censer and candlesticks, placed at the foot of the coffin, in a small vault constructed for the purpose. Then comes the "treasury" money, after which the coffin is covered all over with oiled paper, and over this, with a layer of straw. Finally the pit is filled up with a mixture of water, earth, and lime, and in time this hardens and forms a vault.

Later this may supply the foundation for a miniature house of bricks, with a tiled roof; or of a mound of earth, which is added to, little by little, as the years pass, until the height of this cone is an indication of the time that has elapsed since burial, as well as of the filial devotion of the deceased's descendants. The characteristic tomb of the upper-class Chinese is a circular mound covered over in cement, and surrounded by a grove of trees, and sometimes, a railing, or a wall with imposing gate. But frequently (especially in country districts) it is not so marked off. And, doubtless, so long as superstition enjoins the necessity of choosing the burial place in accordance with the horoscope of the deceased, and the other intricacies of *Feng Shui*, Chinese graves will continue to be found more or less scattered over almost any landscape.<sup>46</sup>

However, to return to our subject. During all this time, while

the family and friends have been occupied with these last duties toward the departed, an official has been waiting, with his retinue, a short distance away, to perform the ceremony of officially fixing the soul in the permanent tablet.

As soon as the coffin is let down, two messengers are dispatched with a complete band of musicians to escort the officer to the grave. Here he takes a seat behind a table, his attendants assume positions on either side of him, and everyone draws near. The eldest son fetches the tablet, and, turning his back toward the sun, kneels down in front of the table, holding the tablet on his back with both hands. Musicians and lictors keep up a continual din, while an attendant unties a writing brush and vermilion ink, which are fastened to the tablet. The ink is moistened with drops of wine, or the blood of the white cock, taken from the comb. When the brush has been dipped into the ink, the official rises, and moves solemnly toward the kneeling son. The noise increases, and bystanders draw near. The bearer of the state umbrella holds it over the official's head. This dignitary now removes the string of coins and red cloth from the tablet, and holding both in his hands, receives the writing brush, breathes over it, and slowly points with it to the sun. Then begins the ceremony called "dotting the tablet."

As prepared for this solemn occasion, the tablet bears engraved on its uppermost part, the image of the sun surrounded with clouds, and the head of the dragon; while in its central column has been written a large character, which, however, is incomplete. That is to say, it lacks one stroke to form the word "Lord," and this the official will presently add. It is the bestowal of this title upon the dead, by a representative of the government, that supplies the essential motive for the ceremony, though other characters, also inscribed on the tablet likewise receive the touch of vermilion ink. These latter are the actual "dots," whereas the mark added to the central character is a stroke.

On inquiry among the Chinese, as to the significance of this title of "Lord," one gathers that while the greatest of imaginable dignity is none too high to be thus conferred upon its object, it is the thought of spiritual, rather than earthly supremacy which it is intended to convey, and which inspires it. The ceremony varies in different parts of the country, as well as with the circumstances of the



family. Among the humbler folk it is commonly performed in the home, before the tablet is given its place among the other sacred relics of the previously departed, this being one of the expected and accepted functions of the town magistrate. The higher the rank of the official, the more desirable to secure his services; and when the rite is consummated in ideal form, it proceeds about as follows.

It was at the instant when our official, brush in hand, was pointing with it toward the sun, that we digressed momentarily. He now touches the upper part of the tablet, where, as we have said, the sun and clouds appear; and speaking rapidly, and in low tones, he declaims: "I mark the heavens, pour out all your purity, O heavens!" Next he touches the pedestal, saying: "I mark the earth, operate efficaciously, O earth!" Now come two dots on the dragon's head, one on either side, and the subdued voice continues: "I dot the ear, be acute, O ears!" After which, two more, nearer the center: "I dot the eyes, be sharp, O eyes!"

To the left of the large character, which stands alone in the center, is inscribed a column of smaller characters representing the male descendants presenting the tablet, in which is included the character for "male." The latter now receives a dot, while the officiator murmurs: "I mark the males. Live long, O males!" Last of all comes the stroke on the central character, which transforms it into the word "Lord," and the concluding words: "I mark the tablet. Display spirituality, O tablet!"

Despite the solemn portent of these phrases, they are inaudible even to the closest of the bystanders, emphasis of manner being, of course, proscribed in persons of rank, at all times, but more particularly in public.

The habitation of the soul having now been officially, as well as spiritually established, the illustrious one throws away the brush, and a salute is fired in his honour. While someone returns the tablet to its place on the table, the officer approaches the grave as if with the intention of prostrating himself to worship. But this act of condescension may be permitted only at a price—using the term advisedly; and if the mourners hasten to throw themselves on their knees before him, as etiquette demands, they are only partly concerned with this phase of their duty. For they thus, by the same token, convey to him that they wish to avoid the doubling of his fee, which his act of worship

would entail. Whereupon, the point having been suggested and received, in characteristic fashion, the officer now declines their show of reverence, rushes up to the prostrate ones, urging them to stand up, and extending his arms as if to assist them. Then, suddenly, he disappears, either into his chair, if the burial place lie on a hillside, which frequently it does; or his carriage, or, again perhaps, in the modern equipage of officials, his motor-car, though these are seldom used at funerals. Another salute is fired, and he sets off.

Meantime, relatives and servants have been busily arranging the sacrificial articles around the grave, where an altar has been erected for the sacrifice to the God of Earth, which rite is to be performed by another waiting official. He is now conducted with equal ceremony to a position in front of the altar, and begins by presenting to the god three incense sticks held up to his forehead, and bowing. Then one of his suite deposits incense in the censer that stands among the other articles, and the official kneels down on a mat, bows his forehead three times to the ground, solemnly rises and retires. On his palanquin, as on that of his predecessor, a red cloth has been spread, with gilt flowers, signifying literary honours, to hold it fast.

After his departure the mourners continue the ceremonies of incense sticks and bowings, and the whole time priests have been reciting soul-saving canons, and chanting litanies, accompanied by handbells, clappers and musical instruments. After the sacrifice to the God of Earth, the mourners perform a similar one called "sacrifice to the soul." The ceremonies conclude with a bonfire of paper money, and after this the eldest son replaces the tablet in its pavilion; whereupon he thanks and dismisses the geomancer and the headman of the gravediggers with courteous bows. Another mourner takes charge of the incense burner, placing it in the tablet pavilion, while parcels of evil-dispelling red silk threads are distributed to all present, except the hired persons.

And then the procession returns, in the same order. The soul is now believed to have been made happy, and hence for the present there must be no more wailing. On the way to the house, however, the cortège encounters the female mourners prostrate on the pavement, and still chanting the dirges. They are waiting to receive the soul. The various articles are taken from the pavilions again, by the same persons, and carried into the house; and all begin dolorously wailing.



The objects are arranged on the table which had stood in front of the coffin. The priests recite a few formulæ, and then the mourners change sackcloth garments for those of mourning, and prostrate themselves, first the males, and then the females.

After this, all sit down to the disposal of the sacrificial offerings, now set out on numerous tables, where the guests are seated according to rank. The spirit of the feast is that dead and living are partaking together. All guests on departing are escorted to the door with ceremony and expressions of gratitude, the family providing their means of transport to and from the house.

#### IN CONCLUSION.

It is probable that the end of our observation tour of the field of Chinese funeral customs has been reached, not without a prevailing impression, among the well-informed, of volumes left unsaid—as inevitably must be the fate of any attempt at rendering a general presentment of some particular aspect of Chinese civilization.

But, if our course, having been laid out principally with an eye to fundamentals, has been punctuated with the disappointed hopes of readers who had anticipated the revivification of vaguely stirring memories, and the interpretation, here and there, of uncomprehended glimpses at the Chinese manner of disposing of the dead, the fact is not more unusual than the majority of first-hand experiences under the best of guides. For, while, obviously, the adequate treatment of the details pertaining to these rites in various parts of the country might easily test the capacity of the present volume, the common difficulty shared by foreign witnesses of these ceremonies is the discovery of a native interpreter to whom all the features of any given spectacle of the sort will be entirely intelligible—a condition no whit more astonishing, however, than the fact, with which it is allied, that the folk of adjacent districts are nearly always unable to comprehend one another's dialects.

An instance of this peculiarity—one of many experienced by the writer—comes to mind at the moment, as rather aptly illustrating the point; and perhaps the reader will accept its recital as the parting words of the self-appointed conductor of our expedition over the past and present of China.

The adventure, as it properly might be called, was one of the incidental features of a summer's sojourn at a Buddhist temple in the Western Hills, outside of Peking, the occasion having manifested itself, first of all, as an opportunity of obtaining an intimate view of a peasant's funeral, under what promised to be ideal conditions. The usual accompaniments of native etiquette, liberally flavoured with method, had not, of course, been omitted; and as the prospect offered the means of contrast with the splendours of the spectacles typical of the nearby capital, as well as the interest always attaching to the customs of the lowly, it seemed a chance plainly meant to be seized by the forelock. And one soon learns, in China, to dally not with opportunity.

It was just at dusk on the evening of an uneventful day, that the old temple master issued his invitation, summoning the guest from her quarters overlooking the lotus pond, and the ruined pedestal of a stupa that alone remains to bear testimony of Sung glories; for the monastery is one of the "restored"—a hope-destroying and purely technical term signifying new buildings, fresh paint, clean interiors, and a general absence of similarity to original effects. Compensations enough there are, to be sure, in the historical associations, the outlook over the surrounding plains and hills, and, above all, in the daily routine of the temple—though these latter are sensed mainly by the ear. The high treble of childish voices rises incessantly from the classroom in the rear, where throughout the livelong day, and at times, until long after dark, the slender young acolytes are reciting their interminable lessons; while at stated intervals, the neighbourhood of the temple itself resounds with the clap-clap of the wooden fish and the droning chant of the priests at their devotions, whither they are summoned by the deep-throated bronze bell at the entrance, and the muffled boom of the drum in the dim, candle-lit interior. Even the hum of insects and the twittering of the birds in the great old trees take on a new significance, and sleeping or waking, one appears to be floating luxuriously on a sea of sound, infinitely soothing and peace-producing. Now and again, too, it is stilled, as though in polite consideration for the little bells agitated by the wind under the eaves of the tiled roof of the temple, as otherwise their faint, silken tinkle would be altogether ignored.

It was during one of these periods of solemn hush, that the visitor

reached the main courtyard, where, in the semi-darkness, the old priest stood portentously waiting by the temple door. The mother of one of his parishioners, it transpired, had died on the day previous; and the priests would shortly be setting out for the humble mud shack, about two miles off, across country, to officiate at the ceremonies for the repose of the soul. These were to last throughout the night, for at dawn the body was to be interred.

The phraseology of the message, entrusted to the able interpretation of the guest's servant-guide—an old Pekingese, trained to the transmission of delicate meanings to the initiated—was delightfully characteristic. The bereaved, it was explained, was a very poor young man, indeed; and therefore, all concerned were torn with a sense of guilt at thought of introducing the *tai-tai* into the lamentably unworthy surroundings in which she would find herself.

Clearly, here was a "situation!" And obediently, the *tai-tai*, long since attuned to the subtleties of such, seized the cue. Shrinking visibly in decorous reserve from an act that might appear as an unwarranted intrusion on the grief of the stricken family, she did not neglect carefully to place a foot, so to speak, across the threshold of the "open door," lest it slam to, inadvertently, as frequently enough happens, for mysterious and never-fully-understood reasons. Through this channel of negotiations, however, now poured forth voluble and flowery protestations to the effect, that such were the overpowering virtues of this particular foreign lady, that her presence at such a time could not be other than welcome—that, in fact, it was greatly to be desired.

The point, obviously, was approaching. Wherefore, the *tai-tai* ventured timidly to emerge from her former attitude, pronouncing this to be a fortuitous circumstance that coincided happily with a lively and frankly confessed interest in the customs of the lowly. Whereupon, all of this charming circumlocution translated itself into the bald and uncomprising tongue of the visitor, as signifying merely that a sum of money would serve readily to eradicate all qualms, of whatever nature, on both sides. Thus, there remained nothing to be done except the removal of the scene of conference, from the holy precincts of the temple courtyard, and its presiding spirit to the private quarters of the guest, and the reduction in the number of participants, to *tai-tai* and guide.



And this momentous discussion, having here shown itself—by the same sort of methods and the expenditure of time required by etiquette for the conduct of these affairs—to be concerned with the matter of three dollars, Mex., our little party set out presently, in the pitchy darkness, to descend the steep hill, on the side of which the temple is set, and to make its stumbling way over rut and furrow and stubble, preceded and followed by lantern bearers, and with the hand of the guest tightly clasped in that of the old temple master.

Over toward the left, in the distance, Peking, transmuted by the alchemy of night, into a faint, golden glow, lay low down in the sky—the only light in the surrounding blackness, and just such a dim radiance as would be cast by any other city. And, suddenly, into the atmosphere of the simple, country scene, there was injected a sense of disillusionment. The wonder city seemed to have succumbed to the touch of some satiric monster who, by dissolving crenellated walls and imposing gates, had shorn her of mystery and suggestion—had, in fact, rendered her commonplace, as when a woman, with secret uglinesses to conceal, is accidentally bereft of the garments of allure.

So one turned with relief to the open fields, and the black line of hills on the right; while our procession gathered momentum, at each little isolated shack in the course of the two miles, by means of a gradually growing army of recruits—including dogs. It was a company, be it said, that throughout maintained the respectful silence demanded of the followers of the holy chieftain of the district. Finally was achieved a cluster of humble dwellings. Under the kindly touch of the darkness, one discerned no particularly striking signs of the much-emphasized poverty of the inhabitants; but, at all events, an alleyway, somewhat broader than the others, promptly swallowed us, with more or less of a gulp; and assisted in the process, by a shaven priest in voluminous robes, and other similarly muffled figures looming opaquely behind him, at intervals. To these he passed us on, each in his turn, doing likewise, after silently acknowledging the master's salutations, explanations, and introductions of the guest.

"Music" and wailings now filled the air, and the glare of torches made the path all too uncertain; but we moved rapidly, none the less, and followed by that section of the waiting population which was not already crowded into the illuminated "matshed," whose entrance



now opened before us. On the instant of our arrival, a resplendent figure, crowned as one of the heavenly kings, began a chant, accompanied, at intervals, by voices that came from huddled-up, dark-robed figures on either side of the table at which he sat enthroned. These also beat upon the wooden fish, or on gongs and cymbals, or agitated clappers, and whatnot, while candles flared, and incense rose on the air.

At right angles to this table wooden benches had been set, on either side of the mat, where the eldest son crouched on his knees, with his forehead to the ground, and his long hair spread all about. Over his body stumbled temple master, guest and guide, disposing themselves on one of the benches, while as many as possible of the rest of the party chose the one opposite—evidently not, it speedily became apparent, from any interest in the proceedings, which they ignored throughout in favor of stares and loud-spoken though good-natured comments on the “foreign man,” as the Chinese term runs.

And almost immediately, there stood before us a person, whose indescribably un-clean apron proclaimed him to be the cook hired to prepare the sacrificial feast, and who began what proved to be the first of a series of persecutions, inspired by the desire to serve the *tai-tai* with food. For the nonce, happily, the excuse of having just eaten averted the inevitable, and one’s attention was given to the ceremonies at the altar table.

Among the priests, not a head was turned, yet one could have sworn to meeting the preoccupied, but curious glance of each, by the peculiar trick possessed by Chinese eyes. The program moved rapidly from number to number, but in these the temple master, still holding the guest’s hand, took no part. The bewildering effect of the sudden transition from the quiet and darkness of the outdoors to what seemed for the moment like brilliant illumination was heightened by the weird sensations of the journey. Aeons of time seemed to have passed since our descent into the dense, black void of an elemental world, wherein we had been the only moving creatures. Then suddenly, we had been propelled directly into this crowded tent that literally quivered with strange noises. The wails of the mourners, the boom and clangor of drums and brass, and the incantations of the priests seemed to be contending amongst themselves for a supremacy achieved first by one group and then by another; while now and then, the palm of victory was carried off by the chattering onlookers, who

appeared to be conducting a rival campaign on their own. The whole effect was, of course, overwhelming, and yet, amidst all the resultant confusion of mind, there was a moment when the amused thought rose clearly, that the benign old priest had deftly contrived to reduce the expenses of the occasion by the sum of three dollars. For, obviously, not he, but the splendid person at the sacrificial table, was the officiator.

The reflection was submerged, in the next instant, however, when a solemn hush of expectancy superseded the din. The head priest had risen, having first, with the utmost *sang froid*, reassured himself as to the proper position of his crown, by consulting a small hand mirror, in full view of the audience. The time had arrived, evidently, for the reading and subsequent burning of the letter addressed to the dead. The priest faced the coffin, which was in full view—an unusual arrangement—being set high up on a trestle, and not screened off, directly opposite the altar table.

White curtains hung on either side of it, and there was no portrait of the deceased. Below it was a long table, with the inevitable incense-burners, candlesticks and bowls of sacrificial food; and here sat the mourners in their sackcloth garments and caps. The majority were women, and the inquiry as to which of the men might be the husband elicited the surprised rejoinder, that husbands are not expected to take part in the funeral rites of wives. They may do so, if they choose, but as it is not "custom fashion" it would be regarded as an eccentricity, especially among the poor. This husband might be about the house somewhere, but it would be by no means unusual, one learned, if he were occupied elsewhere, in the search for that obvious necessity,—a new wife. At all events, seniors take no intimate part in the funeral rites of those below them in authority; and hence a mother does not accompany the body of her son to the grave. A wife attends that of her husband, and children those of their parents. The eldest son is, of course, the central figure, always, as is clearly to be seen in these simple funerals.

During the interval occupied by this conversation, the letter had been burned, as well as a large number of long ribands of inscribed paper, bearing the name and age of the deceased, and prayers to the heavenly host for her safe passage to the Lotus Lake. But there were neither soul tablet, nor paper effigies; and the paper money was of the

rudest description,—no padlocked trunks of paper ingots, nor “treasury” notes and their uniformed guardians. Otherwise the funeral rites were being conducted according to ritual. And, curiously enough, it required the sense of the initiated to discern by these absent features, the poverty of the family on which so much streees had been laid; for mourners, in sackcloth robes, look very much alike, and the effect of the interior, with the priests and their paraphernalia, and the crowd of onlookers, was usual enough to pass unnoticed in the excitement.

Moreover, one’s view of the table below the coffin had been constantly crossed and recrossed, for some time back, by the cook, bearing aloft his steaming bowls of food that were to constitute the feast. In the evident conviction that his was the major role of the evening’s entertainment, this individual shouted and elbowed his way through the crowd, with an extraordinary and shocking lack of ceremony. Apparently, the services were either drawing to a close, or the night’s program was to be interrupted in the middle (it was nearly midnight) on the guest’s account. In fact, the suggestion was not contradicted. The *tai-tai* would not be wishing to remain on the scene till the last, and her departure without having partaken of the feast was not to be contemplated for a moment.

Meantime, the bowls, and their auxiliary dishes of sweetmeats and whatnot, were being set down on a round table standing directly behind us, and seemed to be approaching the requisite number (twelve, representing the Cycle of Animals) when, suddenly, a tremendous impetus appeared to be given to all the noises. The gongs, cymbals and drums burst forth with appalling vigor, the chants were accelerated, and the dirges of the mourners increased to a frenzy in volume and intensity. The women among these began rocking about in spasms of apparently uncontrollable grief, and the imminent risk involved, of toppling off the narrow benches, was suddenly realized when one (the daughter-in-law!) fell to the ground. Tenderly they gathered her up, replaced her on the bench, and supported her there, with encircling arms.

And upon this, there began an interminable passing round and round the table, from one to another of the howlers, of a little bowl of oil, with floating wick. Time after time the little light made its way from hand to hand, with nothing, evidently, in the recitative of



the participants to explain the ceremony; for the face of the guide plainly registered nothing but the blank surprise to which he confessed. And this, on the part of a Pekingese, as regards a custom manifesting itself in the suburbs of the capital!

The attention of the temple master being for the moment centered elsewhere, the guide left the scene of action to make inquiry among the bystanders; but one noted that the first two or three attempts met with unsuccess, and that he disappeared into the dark regions beyond, whence he returned presently with the affrighting news that the little bowl must circulate the exact number of times represented by the age of the deceased,—which was seventy-four! The ceremony, he interjected, was common enough in this district, though he had never witnessed it before. At its conclusion, the feast would be in order.

There now ensued a general let-down on all sides, except, of course, at the table in front of the coffin. The priests stretched themselves, or rose from their places; and the head priest removed his crown. The musicians lolled about on the ground, and conversations sprang up among the groups into which the assemblage broke up; while the temple master proceeded to render the interval as interesting as possible for the guest. One was invited to examine the sacred objects used in the services; and—what was infinitely more important—one answered the priests' questions, the usual ones, as to how long one had been in China, and why, and in what parts; one's nationality, age, family connections, and so on endlessly. Meanwhile the dirge chanters grew more and more breathless, and the eldest son alternately prostrated himself and stood up with incense sticks held to his forehead. And at long last, there was silence, with the mourners in a state bordering on collapse, and the visitor not far removed from the same.

Whereupon came the feast, the guest seated among the priests at one table, the mourners at another, and the whole interior and the doorway, crowded with attentive observers, from whom rose exclamations of wonder when the guest's chopsticks behaved properly, and shouts of laughter whenever they did not, which was frequently. And at the excellence of the food, one was amazed again; and learned that poverty might not be plead against the stern necessity of placing only "number one chow" before the august priests.



The feast over, our party threaded its way toward the outdoors, and beyond the entrance came the presentation of the guest to the eldest son—a difficult situation, inasmuch as the young man remained upon the ground throughout, having precipitated himself before the bounteous *tai-tai*, in a kneeling posture, with outstretched hands and forehead to the ground, from which position he rapidly raised his body as far as the knees, only, however, to fall forward again. And so we left him, the old priest expanding on the magnanimity of the visitor, which had set the poor young man on the road to fortune! And indeed, on a subsequent visit to the temple master, a year later, it was the first subject mentioned—which made it clearly incumbent on the recipient of the eulogium, to inquire if there had been any more deaths.

“Happily, no,” was the reply, uttered in tones that prepared the questioner for delicate suggestions to come. “But there had been a baby!”

Excellent old priest! But the incident that stands out, over and above the immense fatigue of the return journey on that memorable night, is the titbit of “news,” of which the guide unbosomed himself, in awestricken whispers, and as the result of his evident intimate contact with the sacrificial wines at the feast. From this highly circumstantial tale it appeared that the old man, in his blue cotton coolie-cloth robes, faded with numberless washings, was very rich, owned all of the houses we had passed, and the farms over which we had travelled—including that of the poor young man—and as many more as could be imagined from a prodigious sweep of the guide’s arm that seemed to include the visible universe!

THE END

# Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Great Learning, as distinguished from Primary Learning—the two divisions of the educational system of ancient China.

<sup>2</sup> These colours and devices are tabulated as follows in Giles *A Chinese-English Dictionary*:

Grades (each divided into two classes)		Buttons	Civil	Badges	Military
1	.. .. .	Red (plain)	Coral	White crane	Unicorn
2	.. .. .	Red (chased)	Coral	Golden	Lion
3	.. .. .	Blue (clear)	Sapphire	Peacock	Panther
4	.. .. .	Blue (opaque)	Lapis lazuli	Wild goose	Tiger
5	.. .. .	White (clear)	Rock crystal	Silver pheasant	Bear (black)
6	.. .. .	White (opaque)	Adularia	Eastern egret	Bear (mottled)
7	.. .. .	Gold (plain)	Gold	Mandarin duck	Tiger cat
8	.. .. .	Gold (chased)	Gold	Quail	Seal
9	.. .. .	Gold (chased)	Gold	Fly-catcher	Fabulous bovine animal.

The character for "old age" is engraved on the button of the second class, to distinguish it from the first.

<sup>3</sup> As has already been mentioned, the name *Huang Tze* applies only to the shop symbols illuminating our pages. In addition to these the shop may or may not display a horizontal inscribed board running across the front and over the doorway. These are called *chiao pai*, while the *tiao pai* is the vertical sign.

<sup>4</sup> The ancient name of Suchow.

<sup>5</sup> The Six Dynasties here referred to reigned approximately from 250 to 550 A.D. The "Style of the Six Dynasties" followed the invention of the two phonetic systems, the first of which has been called the Chinese alphabet. It divides a monosyllable into two parts, with an initial character and one for finals. After this came the System of Four Tones. The alphabet was based on the Sanskrit and evolved with the aid of the Hindu teachers of Buddhism, the reigning emperor at the time, Liang Wu Ti, having been a great Buddhist enthusiast, who several times deserted his throne for the monastery. The extraordinary, not to say revolutionary effect on Chinese civilisation produced by the spread of the Indian faith, was felt not less in the sciences than in the arts. In the latter field China accepted the Greek along with the Indian influence, while into Chinese arithmetic, astronomy, and astrology there entered also the touch of India. "But the changes resulting from the syllabic spelling and the Four Tones are of the most permanent value to Chinese literature," says Li Eng Bing. (*Outlines of Chinese History*).

<sup>6</sup> A "foreign wines" enterprise was started at Chefoo, in 1895, in which first native grapes were used; but later, vines were imported from America and Austria. Years of struggle followed, but at the present time over twenty varieties of wine are in process of maturing, and hundreds of acres on the hills near Chefoo are covered with grape vines.

<sup>7</sup> E. Watson's Special Series, Maritime Customs Report, 1923.

<sup>8</sup> E.T.C. Werner's *Myths and Legends of China*.

<sup>9</sup> P'u Ming's version in A. E. Strehlneck's *Chinese Pictorial Art*.

<sup>10</sup> E. T. C. Werner's *Myths and Legends of China*.

<sup>11</sup> E. T. C. Werner's *Myths and Legends of China*.

<sup>12</sup> I. T. Headland's *Chinese Mother Goose*.

<sup>13</sup> The Hsiung Nu, or Huns, are referred to in Giles' *Glossary of Reference*, as having been "probably the Scythians of Herodotus." They disappeared from history in the 3rd century A.D. The Ougurs (Ugrians) believed to be of the same stock, were first heard of in China under the Wei Dynasty, in A.D. 389. The English word "ogre" is said to have been derived from the name of this tribe. At the time of the Tang dynasty they were the ruling race of Khiva and Bokhara, but paid tribute to the Chinese until 1296, under the Mongol dynasty, at which time the term "Ougurs" seems to have come to mean "Muslimans."

The notes on the Moslem Chinese are summarized from the account appearing in *The Missionary Occupation of China*, Shanghai, 1922.

<sup>14</sup> In the finer baths to which we have alluded, the charges run from one dollar to five.

<sup>15</sup> Arthur Waley's *More Translations from the Chinese*.

<sup>16</sup> From Translations by M. Kennelly, S.J., of Doré's *Researches into Chinese Superstitions*. Vol. I., Part I.

<sup>17</sup> Such conditions as this are not characteristic of the hundreds of factories springing up all over China, which are claimed to be modelled and run on foreign lines, but where the atmosphere is that of industry emerging from hand to machine production.

<sup>18</sup> The Manchus having long since adopted for their own country the Six Board system of the Mings (*Civil Appointments, Revenue, Ceremonies, War, Punishments, and Works*), there followed no apparent change in the form of their government over the Chinese, and most of the latter were continued in the offices they had occupied under the previous dynasty. The "fly in the ointment," however, consisted in the simultaneous appointment of a Manchu to the same office, thereafter conducted by two incumbents, with the Chinese subordinate to the Manchu. (See Li Ung Bing's *Outlines of Chinese History*.)

<sup>19</sup> From Translations by M. Kennelly, S.J., of *Dore's Researches into Chinese Superstitions*. Vol. I., Part I.

<sup>20</sup> Giles' *Glossary of Reference*.

<sup>21</sup> Li Ung Bing (*Outlines of Chinese History*).

<sup>22</sup> Bits of jewelry naturally receive more favourable treatment at the hands of the pawnbroker, than the soiled and shabby articles of clothing, which the Chinese are much given to pawning. There are no existing laws governing the interest charges demanded by the pawnbroker. The rate is an annual one, with the interest charges monthly, three years being allowed for the redemption of pledges.

<sup>23</sup> The degree of fineness mentioned here is that of the Shanghai sycee tael, the weight of which is 565.65 grains. The Haikuan and K'up'ing taels are figured on a basis of 1,000 fine, the former equivalent to 583.30, and the latter to 575.8 grains. For comprehensive data on this intricate subject the reader is referred to *The Currencies of China*, by E. Kann (Kelly & Walsh, Ltd., 1926), a volume which will be found to contain "the last word" on the diverse and varied phases of the money question of China.

<sup>24</sup> Kennelly's translations of *Dore's Researches into Chinese Superstitions*.

<sup>25</sup> The name "Manchu" is derived from the Sanskrit, through the Tibetans, who were among the first to recognize the new Manchu nation, and who used the title "Manjusiri Tahuangti," in addressing the early princes. "Manjusiri," signifying Most Favored and Lucky Ruler. Manjusiri was reduced to Manju, and applied to the people, when Nurbachu gave his dynasty the name of "Tienming," Will of God. Rendered into Chinese, Manju, signifies "A Full Pearl." (Li Ung Bing *Outlines of Chinese History*.)

<sup>26</sup> Li Ung Bing (*Outlines of Chinese History*) ascribes several treatises which made "a valuable contribution to Chinese medical science," to the Emperor Huang-ti, whose reign is set somewhere about 3,800 B.C.

<sup>27</sup> *The Christian Occupation of China*, published by the China Continuation Committee, Shanghai, 1921.

<sup>28</sup> From *Chinese Mother Goose Rhymes*, Isaac Taylor Headland.

<sup>29</sup> See Waley's *More Translations from the Chinese*.

<sup>30</sup> Waley's *One Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems*.

<sup>31</sup> "The wooden fish" is one of the important appurtenances of the Buddhist priest. It resembles the head of the "bonze fish," hence its name. The mouth is considerably distended and emits a clacking sound when the head is beaten by wooden hammers. This is one of the familiar sounds pertaining to Buddhist rites.

<sup>32</sup> Parker's *Ancient China Simplified*.

<sup>33</sup> In the Manchu divisions of rank, the orders descended from first to second class, and so on down to the fifth. Under the Chou dynasty (1122-255 B.C.), during which the ancient heritage of "Li" was so greatly expanded, and brought down to date, as it were, society was divided into four classes: scholars, farmers, artisans, and merchants, with the first class subdivided to include officials and gentry. "A son necessarily followed the calling of his father. Only the scholars were eligible to government offices, which were more or less hereditary. Thus the officeholders and the educated formed the noble class, and the rest were commoners. From the Spring and Autumn Classics, it appears that the only punishments received by nobles of these days were death, imprisonment and banishment. For those outside of this class the penalties were: branding, cutting off the nose, the feet, castration, and death." This demonstrates the antiquity of the eunuch class, and the fact that they were eunuchs "by law" and not mutilated for harem purposes. (Parker) (over)

The feudal system, which had superseded the government by tribes of the earlier ages, and which is seeking to re-establish itself to-day, was greatly perfected by the Duke of Chou, brother of the founder, who later created five ranks of nobles: dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts and barons. At the beginning of the Chou dynasty the country was divided into 1773 feudal states, which later became the Seven States; while with the establishment of the first centralized empire under the T'ang ruler, Shih Huang-ti (221 B.C.) the system passed out for the time being, to be revived for a time under the Hans, but with a great curtailment of the powers of the feudal chiefs.

The high rank of the farmer, as next in importance to the scholar, is explained by the fact that in return for his grant of land, he was expected to supply a proportionate amount of military equipment, each *chin*, as the divisions were called, furnishing four horses, one chariot, three charioteers, seventy-two foot soldiers and twenty-five other men. A feudal king's domain consisted of 64,000 *chin*, or 10,000 chariots. Hence the term, "a state of 10,000 chariots." (Li Ung Bing's *Outlines of Chinese History*).

"The general structure and principles of (the Chinese) system of administration remained the same, with a few variations, from these early times down to the end of the Monarchical Period in 1912—a continuous duration of adherence to type which is probably unique." E. T. C. Werner's *Myths and Legends of China*.

"The system of public competitive literary examinations, conserved by the Manchus from motives of policy, was abolished by them in 1905, on the establishment of modern colleges, whose graduates thereafter became eligible for government positions. During their reign the Li Ki, as one of the ancient classics, had a definite place in the scholar's education, but it is not included in the educational system of the republic."

"This recalls d'Annunzio's reference to the survival of ancient rites in the customs of modern Italy: 'At the foot of a dying man's bed when the death agony was prolonged, two kinsmen deposited a ploughshare, which had the virtue of interrupting the horrors and of hastening death.'" (*The Triumph of Death*).

"This division of time called the Twelve Branches, is supplemented by that known as the Ten Stems. 'By a combination of the Ten Stems with the Twelve Branches, in groups of two in which the former are repeated six times and the latter five times, a series of sixty is produced, which is commonly called by sinologists the Sexagenary Cycle, and is used for naming years, as well as days.'" Garus *Chinese Thought*.

"These have been called the first Chinese priests."

"As to the antiquity of this instrument, there is the statement of Li Ung Bing (*Outlines of Chinese History*) in which he ascribes the invention of the compass to one of the ministers of the "Yellow Emperor," Huangti, (about 3,800 B.C.) the latter having used it during the famous battle of Ch'ü-lu, to locate the armies of a savage tribe of invaders, which had been hidden in a mist produced by the supernatural powers of the leader."

The same author denounces *Feng Shui* as "the greatest enemy to human progress. It interferes with commerce, retards the industrial growth of a nation, and enslaves the human intellect by foisting upon it the superstitions of antiquity."

The sooner it is forgotten by the Chinese, the better for China. . . . It is safe to say that the system has in it Buddhist as well as Taoist elements, since some of the books on *Feng Shui* mention the Sumeru Mountain as the centre of the world. It is also certain that *Feng Shui* and Buddhism have worked hand in hand. Pagodas, originally built as depositories of religious relics, owe their existence, in many places in China, entirely to the prevalence of *Feng Shui*.<sup>37</sup> Meanwhile, however, native building operations are governed by the *Feng Shui* expert, large property owners even maintaining one of these scientists as a regular member of their staffs.

"E. T. C. Werner's *Myths and Legends of China*."

"Again quoting from the *Triumph of Death*: 'They sprinkled a handful of augural grain on the head of the happy wife.'"

"See Sign No. 84."

"Bright home, *yang tze*; Dark home, *yin tze*."

"See Sign No. 93: Children's toys."

"In Shanghai, the highly important function of 'clearing the way' is often performed by two figures mounted on wheeled platforms, the one wearing richly embroidered robes, and the other plain black linen, surmounted by the academician's cap having wings at the back. The former leads the way. His face is blue in colour and his expression fierce enough to intimidate the most daring of devils, but as if nothing were to be left to chance he also flourishes a battle-axe. His companion, on the other hand, is of the gentlest mien imaginable. His face is white, calm in expression, and his rap gaze is fixed on a narrow strip of bamboo inscribed with characters, which he holds in both hands. It was on such slabs of wood that emperors caused their daily commands to be written. They were dropped into the sort of tall bronze urn which is square in shape, with concave sides. The two figures represent the brothers Fong—Fai and Slang—famous characters of the Chou Dynasty, the one illustrious as a warrior and the other as a scholar."

In Shanghai and its vicinity the principal mourners are usually screened from view by means of an enclosing wall made of three, or four, long strips of sackcloth carried by small boys."

"This custom is maintained by means of mausolea provided by the provincial gentry in various parts of the country. Thus, for example, the remains of a native of Shantung, dying in Shanghai, may be placed under the care of the Shantung Guild, in the event that he may not have been possessed of sufficient funds to cover the expenses of shipment to his native province, or in case the family elect to so dispose of the desired interval between death and burial. And there the body may remain for a period not infrequently consuming a year's time, or even longer."

"Chinese cemeteries belong to the family or clan of the deceased . . . and are the metonyms of the villages, and the graves of the houses." It has been the custom of conquering dynasties in China to destroy the tombs of their predecessors, the only exceptions to this rule being the last two lines, the Ming and the Manchus whose tombs are thus the only existing relics. Tombstones have never been used in China, except for the perpendicular inscribed shaft carried by the huge stone tortoises seen in the north. (Werner's *Myths and Legends*).



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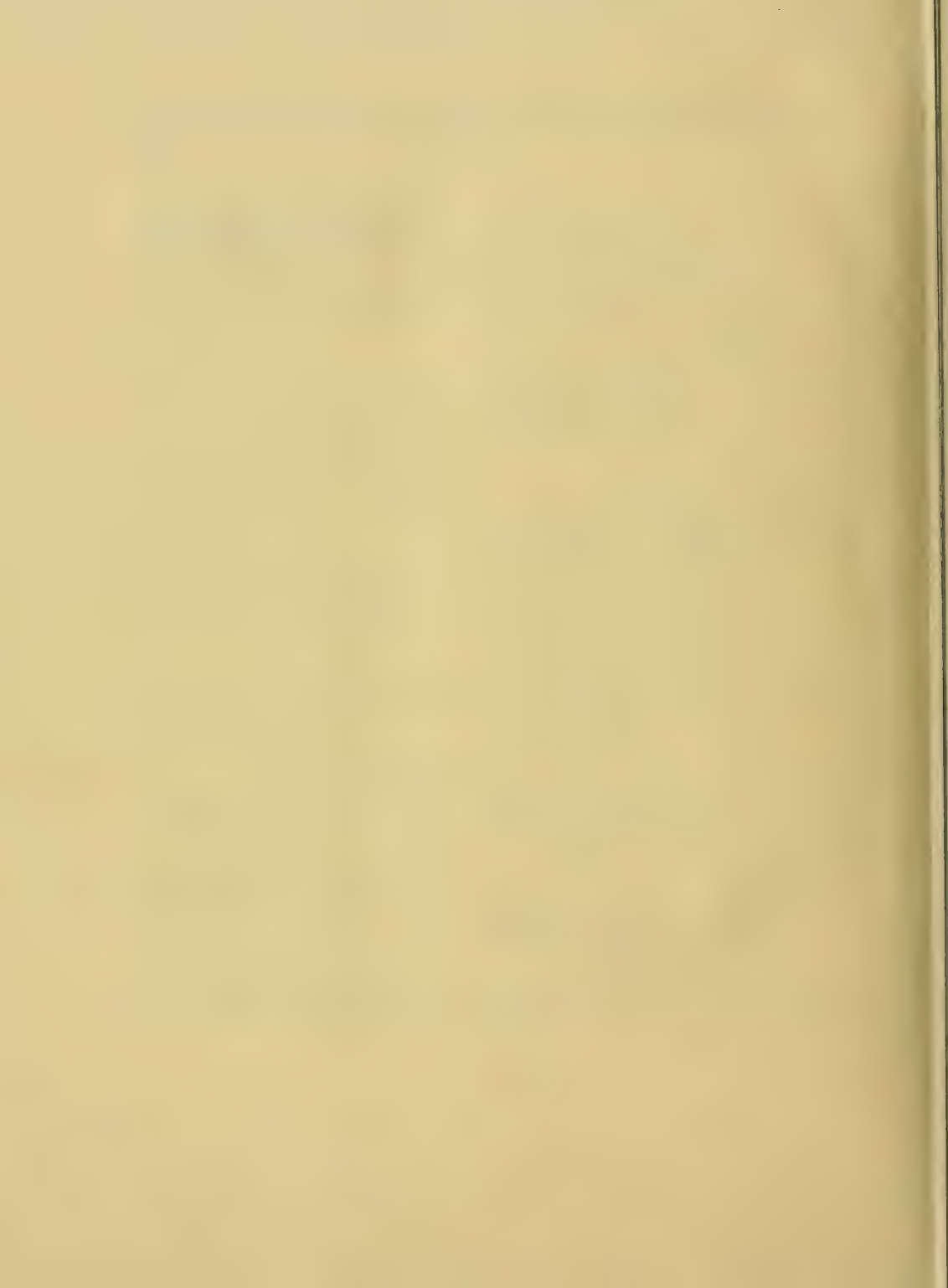
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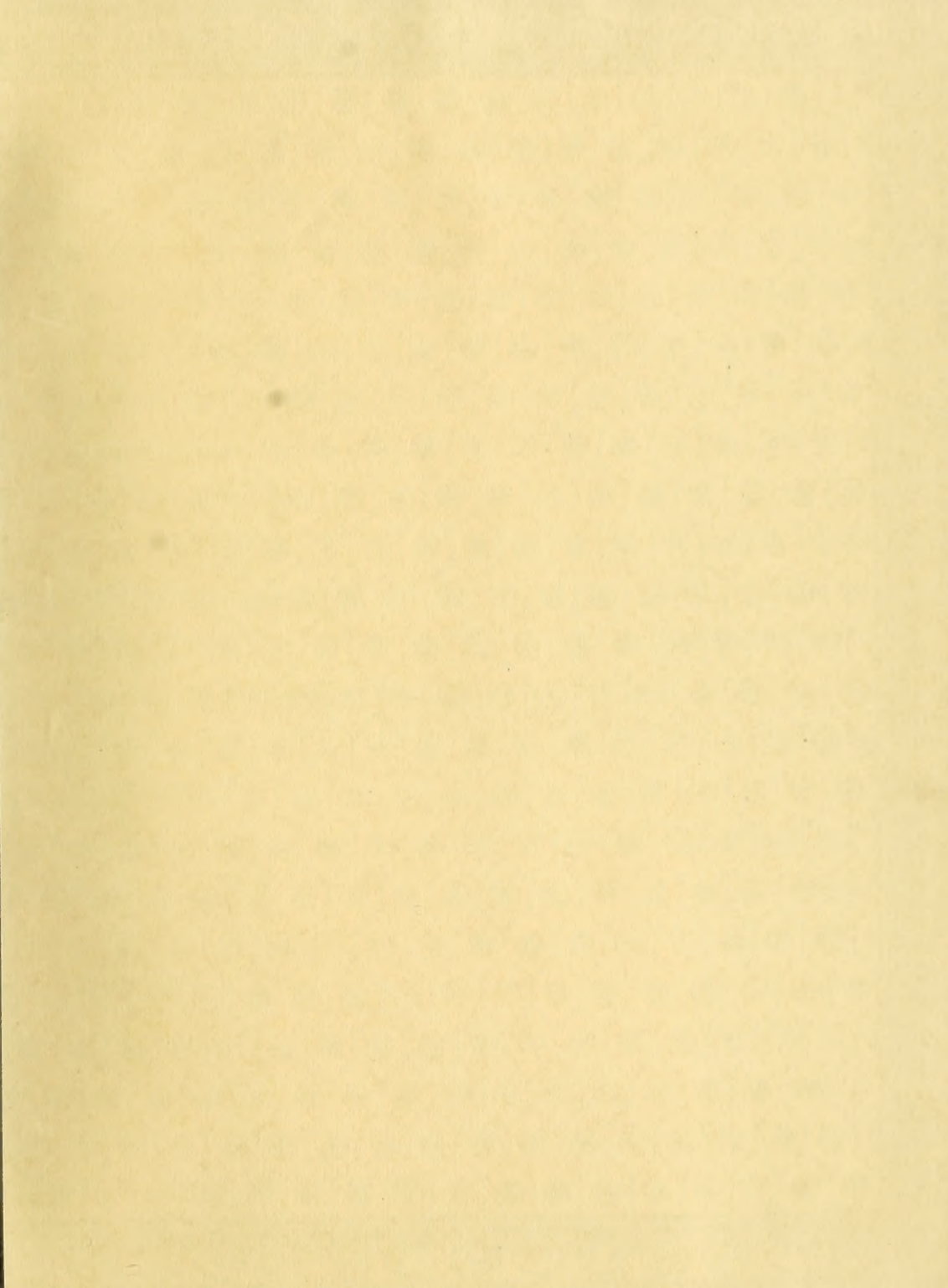
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